The Next Great Awakening

JOSIAH STRONG

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The Next Great Awakening

BY

JOSIAH STRONG

Author of "Our Country," "The New Era," "The Twentieth Century City," "Expansion" and "The Times and Young Men"

"Prepare ye the way of the Lord
Make His paths straight"
—JOHN THE BAPTIST

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THE

NEXT GREAT AWAKENING

I

THE SUPREME NEED OF THE WORLD

THE supreme need of the world is a REAL GOD; not the Great Perhaps, but the great I AM; not a God of yesterday or of to-morrow, but of to-day; not an "absentee" God, but one who is precisely here; not a Sunday God, but an every-day God.

It is much easier to think of God as dealing with Israel and Egypt, Assyria and Babylon, Greece and Rome, than to think of him as ruling and judging the United States, Great Britain and Russia. It is much easier to think of him as sustaining personal rela-

tions to Abraham, Moses and David than to believe that he has a plan of life for you and me.

In our thought we are constantly limiting God in space and time, as if he could be more present there than here, as if he could be more active then than now, as if he were not "the same yesterday, to-day and forever" and everywhere.

It is easy for us to think of him as attending to the great, but not to the small; as if he were the creator and governor of solar systems, but not of molecules and microbes; as if he were the God of presidents and emperors, but not of common folk. We forget that as the infinitely small and the infinitely great are alike beyond us, so they are alike the objects of knowledge and of power which are infinite; and God is as present in the one as in the other.

The world's need of God is as constant and as universal as is his presence; but men are

often as unconscious of the one as of the other. They know that they want, but many do not know that it is God they want; do not know that the need of him is as wide as human life and as deep as the human heart.

Now this need of God, rising into consciousness, is the beginning of religion; and religion is true and vital in proportion as God is correctly and vividly apprehended, and as character and life are brought into harmony with him.

Vital religion always realizes God, while irreligion or worldliness is a practical denial of him; it is living as if God were not; it is leaving out of account the greatest fact in the universe, which is of course the greatest blunder in the universe.

The teachings, rites and ceremonies of religion were originally sincere expressions of belief and feeling inspired by the sense of divinity. But because the repetition of an act tends to create a habit, actions which were

once full of meaning and purpose become at length automatic, and when acts or words are emptied of purpose and feeling they become meaningless. Thus the forms by which religious life is expressed are always in danger of degenerating into mere fossils.

Of course true religion is vital, not mechanical; it is life, not form; it is essence, not mode; it is spirit, not method. When, therefore, the life, the essence, the spirit, all of which spring from the apprehension of God, have departed, then religious institutions, creeds, rituals, customs, may all coexist with utter worldliness; and the way to break the power of worldliness is to get a fresh and vivid apprehension of God.

Moreover, religion needs to change the form of its expression from time to time in order to adjust itself to changed conditions. Life must always be adapted to its environment—the wing to the air, the foot to the ground, the fin to the water, the vegetation to

the climate. If environment essentially changes, life must adapt itself or perish; and this is as true of institutional, as of vegetable, or animal life. The life remains essentially the same, but its form varies with changing conditions.

Now God is the spiritual life of the world, and religion is an expression of that life. The form in which it expresses itself is conditioned by civilization, which may be called its environment. Civilization changes from generation to generation; there are new habits of thought, new modes of life, to which religion, with its institutions, its creeds, its methods, must adapt itself or become fossilized and dead.

One of the greatest needs of every generation is to have its inherited institutions *vitalized;* and this is supremely true of religious institutions. That is, they must be readapted to the changed conditions and new needs of the times. The greater the progress of civilization, therefore, the more imperative is the necessity of a new apprehension of God that will make him

real—a new inspiration of spiritual life that will vivify religious institutions.

All prophets, whether of ancient or modern days, are prophets of *God.* They are the men who with clearer vision than their fellows see God in relation to their own times; and *it is seeing him thus which makes him real.* Their messages are, therefore, the same in substance, viz., God in his relations to human life; but the messages of true prophets vary in form because they are always adapted to the different needs of different ages. "As the prophet whose prophecy is new in substance is no prophet, but a deceiver, so the prophet whose prophecy is old in form is no prophet, but a plagiarist." [1]

All great spiritual awakenings are awakenings to the reality of God. It is the apprehension of him in his relations to existing conditions which makes him real; and when God becomes real, spiritual truths and spiritual

[1] "Ecce Homo," p. 28.

values become real; and spiritual life is manifested in spiritual power.

Do we find that our churches lack power though full of machinery? There is "a wheel in the middle of a wheel," but there is lacking "the spirit of the living creature in the wheels." Life produces organization, but organization does not produce life. A real God is what our churches need, and when they apprehend him as a personal and present reality, they will have life and power.

The tendency to worldliness, like the attraction of gravitation, is a universal downward pull, and is well-nigh as constant. It is in no way peculiar to our own age, of course, but it has had a threefold reinforcement in modern times, which makes it peculiarly difficult for this generation to apprehend God with vividness.

1. The unprecedented material development of the past century has created a materialistic civilization, to which spiritual truths are dim.

To most men the great realities are those which can be seen and handled, weighed and measured, bought and sold. Machinery has multiplied man's productive power many fold. There has been an amazing increase of wealth. Never before has there been such a scale of living among the million. What were once luxuries beyond the reach of the rich are now become the every-day conveniences of the multitude. Luxuries which appeal to every sense have become common; and luxury encourages sensuality, and the sensual cannot see God. Thus materialism has blinded men's spiritual eyes.

2. During the past century the world has acquired a new and radically different habit of thought, whose sign is an interrogation point, and whose effects have become general during the past generation. It is both a cause and an effect of the scientific method, which has increased the world's knowledge as much as machinery has increased its wealth.

The scientific habit of mind does not respect authority, is hostile to dogma, and encourages doubt. This iconoclast has passed through the temple of knowledge (or rather of supposed knowledge; it was really the temple of belief), and has broken many an idol of popular worship. Indeed it has largely destroyed the old temple, and is building it anew and on different foundations.

The scientific spirit is by no means hostile to faith. The destruction of dogma was inevitable; the destruction of faith was incidental. While the two are essentially different, they are intimately related. Faith is the water of life, while dogma is only the cup which contains it. It is the water that is life-giving, but breaking the earthen vessel has spilled its precious contents.

Theology is the interpretation of the facts of religion; and the great increase of knowledge during the past fifty years has thrown new light on the facts and necessitated a new

interpretation of them. When silver passes into solution it loses its form and becomes invisible in the dissolving fluid. It seems to be lost outright, but it is all there. Now theology has for several years been in a state of solution, and many thought it was gone forever. It had lost its form, but the material was all safe, and it is now beginning to recrystalize. The disappearance of dogma, however, naturally and inevitably created a feeling of alarm and an atmosphere of doubt.

3. A third cause of the loss of spiritual apprehension, closely related to the preceding, has been the rapid growth of natural science, which has established the universal reign of law, and has been unable, with microscope, scalpel or crucible, to find in the realm of nature a Personal Will.

The progress of the physical sciences has served to emphasize materialism, to demonstrate the value of the scientific method, and, to many minds, by establishing the reign of

law, has seemed to drive God out of his universe.

The loss of the sense of personality in our relations with God is fatal to piety. "*Persons* are love's world." Without individual accountability, there can be no sense of sin; without individual communion, there can be no prayer; without individual care and leading, there can be no divine providence. There are multitudes of intelligent, Christian men to-day who consider belief in answers to prayer or in divine providence as quite superstitious. The reign of law has been substituted for the reign of God. Natural laws come between him and us. These laws are general; our relations to God, therefore, must be general rather than personal.

Now the very center and life of the Christian religion is a divine *person;* and spiritual life depends on personal relations to him. The word is not, Accept certain principles, but "Follow *me;*" not, I will show you the way,

reveal the truth and lead you unto life, but "I *am* the way, the truth and the life." He does not, like Paul, discourse concerning the resurrection, but says, "I *am* the resurrection." Not his teachings are to be the comfort and strength of his people, but he himself, "Lo, *I* am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And when the nations are judged, men are approved or condemned not by some abstract rule of right, but by a test wholly personal. "*I* was an hungred, and ye gave *me* meat," or, "Ye gave *me* no meat."

It follows, therefore, that to take away the sense of personal relationship to God is to exclude him from our lives, and to devitalize our religion.

Thus the materialism of the day, the prevalent atmosphere of doubt, and the substitution of general laws for a Personal Will in the government of the world, have all served to reinforce the spirit of worldliness, which is practical atheism. Men cannot be moved with-

out motives, and when God is unreal, the leverage of Christian truth has lost its fulcrum.

Now these three causes, discussed above, which for half a century have served as the allies of worldliness, may each one be transformed into a handmaid of religion.

Materialism is neither peculiar to wealth nor its necessary accompaniment. The destitute savage probably lives for the material and is its slave, while on the other hand it is possible to command every material good and yet live a spiritual life, because the material is subordinated to the higher nature.

In man, the physical is not an enemy of the spiritual. When life is normal, the body is the servant of the spirit. It is through the body that the spirit expresses itself, and it is through the body that it is reached and influenced. In like manner, when we appreciate the relations of the physical or the material to the kingdom of God, we shall see that rightly

used it is not a hindrance but a help, a medium through which influences may be brought to bear on the spiritual life of the world for the upbuilding of the kingdom. Indeed, if space permitted, it might be shown that the material progress of the past century will prove in God's hands one of the most powerful agencies in promoting the coming of his kingdom in the world.

Again, the new habit of thought, or the scientific method, certainly produced an atmosphere of paralyzing doubt; but this was part of the necessary cost of progress, the natural penalty of credulity; for believing what one ought to doubt often leads to doubting what one ought to believe.

Real knowledge can never be dangerous to true faith. The man who is afraid of light confesses thereby that he suspects his own creed. There is now appearing a new faith which is courageous because it is intelligent. It does not fear the light, because it was grown

in the light. That is not real faith, but superstition, which flourishes in darkness or the twilight.

> "Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell;
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster." [2]

The new faith and reason have no quarrel. The notes they strike are different but harmonious.

If the scientific method has destroyed dogmas, it has led us back to Christ, back to the simplicity which is in him, and back to the kingdom of God, which was the great subject of his teaching; and if doubt paralyzes activity, a true conception of the kingdom inspires enthusiasm.

Again, if the reign of law has taken away a God who visited men from time to time in "special" providences, we find when it is cor-

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[2] "In Memoriam."

rectly understood that it has given to us an immanent God, in whom we live and move and have our being—one who is not far enough from us even to be near, but who lives within us.

A God of law is infinitely more worthy of trust and of worship than a god of caprice. He may be far better known and, therefore, become more real to us. Jesus said, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends" (Jno. xv. 15). Natural laws, which are seen to be simply the divine methods, tell to us the story of God's activities for ages past, and reveal to us in good measure his purposes for the future, thus taking us into his confidence as friends, and enabling us to become intelligent and efficient co-laborers with him unto the kingdom.

Thus it appears that what is needed to-day is to interpret God to men in the terms of present-day knowledge, and to present him in

vital relations to the life of our own times. When this is done, he will become real.

This conclusion is justified not only by *a priori* reasoning, but also by history, which will be shown in the following chapter.

II

THE LAW OF SPIRITUAL QUICKENING

The laws of growth seem to be much the same for soul and body, for the individual and for the nation; but moral and spiritual development differ in an important particular from intellectual and physical.

The latter are more gradual. There are of course periods of quiescence and again of quickening, both in physical and in intellectual growth, but the progress is imperceptible from day to day. On the other hand, moral and spiritual changes which are quite revolutionary may take place in an hour. It is true that the processes which lead up to these changes are usually slow, but the changes themselves—the

outward expressions of the inward life—are apt to be sudden, and are often startling.

Ideas, like plants, grow in the light. Truth which is merely speculative may stimulate intellectual growth, but it sustains no necessary relation to life. Moral truth, however, bears directly on conduct. When I learn that things which are equal to the same thing are equal to each other, it lays on me no obligation of any sort. But when I learn that God is my father and that man is my brother, then I ought to *do* something about it. Moral truth, as distinguished from speculative, is truth from the knowledge of which follows the obligation to do something.

Now man is a bundle of habits. Our activities run in habits as rivers flow in channels. The channel of habit is formed by the stream of activity, and then guides that stream. The deepening channel, cut by the continued flow, makes it increasingly difficult to turn the stream from its wonted course. That is, a

habit once acquired is self-perpetuating, so that only extraordinary conditions can turn the stream of activity into a new channel.

A small increase in the knowledge of moral truth is usually insufficient to modify an established habit. Increasing moral light, however, causes uneasiness, until it becomes clear, at length, that we are in possession of moral truth which demands a change in our life. Then there is apt to be more or less of a struggle, the issue of which is either the triumph of the old habit and the deterioration of character, or the breaking up of the old habit of doing or not doing, and an expression of the new light in a new life with changed activities, which of course strengthens character. This process is repeated, over and over, so that moral and spiritual growth usually shows a series of changes more or less cataclysmal.

Because this is true of the individual it is also true of society. Its inherited customs

become its confirmed habits. Established usage disguises and sanctions many evils, so that they are not only tolerated but clung to tenaciously. New light meets first with indifference and then with opposition. Increasing light causes increasing uneasiness until, at length, a change more or less revolutionary transforms society. Thus the moral and religious progress of the world is marked by periods, inaugurated by what are known as reformations or great revivals.

The physical growth of a nation should be accompanied or followed by a corresponding intellectual and moral development, that the greater responsibilities and temptations, which accompany increased riches and power, may not lack adequate wisdom or a temperate self-restraint. Repeatedly, though not invariably, a period of extraordinary material prosperity has been followed or accompanied by one of exceptional intellectual and spiritual activity. The nineteenth century certainly was charac-

terized by a material development altogether marvelous and scarcely less than miraculous; and intellectual progress was hardly less remarkable than material. The scientific method has made us rich in knowledge. I suppose it is safe to say that the greater part of the world's knowledge to-day is less than one hundred years old. Of course the progress of knowledge is destructive as well as constructive. The old structure of belief had to be destroyed before the new could take its place. The intellectual progress of the age, therefore, as we have already seen, necessarily involved the prevalence of doubt, and consequently served to intensify the materialism which was the natural legacy of an age of unparalleled material progress.

The question, then, arises whether this great advance along physical and intellectual lines is to be followed by a new advance along spiritual lines.

The advent of the new century was hailed,

both in Great Britain and America, as a fitting time for a new awakening to the things of the spirit, a keener sense of realities which sustain no relation to the yard-stick, the scales or the crucible, a fuller appreciation of values that are never quoted on the stock exchange. Earnest and extended efforts were made on both sides of the Atlantic, and especially in England, to arouse the conscience and to quicken the religious life. Great meetings were held; but in England the attendance was almost exclusively that of professed Christians, while in the United States the number of conversions was apparently no greater than is expected to accompany the regular activities of the churches every winter.

Is there to be during the twentieth century a mighty religious awakening, such as occurred in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and in both the first and second half of the nineteenth? These great movements, which lifted nations and civilizations to a

higher plane, did not come uncaused or haphazard. It is as easy to invoke them as to

> " . . . call spirits from the vasty deep.
> But will they come when you do call for them?"

Not simply for the calling. Means must be adapted to ends. The law which governs such movements must be obeyed. The way of the Lord must be prepared, his paths must be made straight.

These movements differed widely in character, in method, and in the conditions from which they sprang; some of them had political as well as religious elements, whose causes were complex and remote; and yet the study of them reveals the fact that *each of these great religious awakenings came in connection with the preaching of a neglected Scriptural truth which was precisely adapted to the peculiar needs of the times.*

A rapid review of these movements will, I think, suffice to establish the above generalization.

The Sixteenth Century.

At the time of the great awakening, known as the German Reformation, the individual was wholly overshadowed by the church; his conscience was in her keeping, his liberties were sacrificed to her absolutism, his salvation was dependent on her sacraments. A truth was needed, the acceptance of which would free the individual from bondage to the church and bring him into right personal relations with God.

When Luther was at Rome toiling up "Pilate's Stairway" on his knees, and the text, "The just shall live by faith," flashed into his mind, it came as a revelation, and he saw that man must be saved, not by ceremonials nor sacraments nor works, but by a vital faith. It followed that the personal relation of every soul to Jesus Christ was fundamental, and the central truth preached by Luther and the other reformers was justification by faith.

The prevalence of this teaching, heretofore

neglected, established the importance of the individual, won for him liberty of conscience, and made his salvation subjective—a matter of character. Thus the peculiar needs of the times called for a truth which had long been lost to sight, and the great awakening came when that truth was powerfully preached.

The Seventeenth Century.

The next great spiritual movement came in the following century, and is known as the Puritan revival.

Civil power, which under the feudal system had been widely distributed among the nobles, gradually passed from weaker to stronger and fewer hands, until now it was centralized in the king, who claimed by divine right an authority superior to all human control. Laud and the churchmen whom he led were abject in their dependence on the crown. "They erected the most dangerous pretensions of the monarchy into religious dogmas. Their

model, Bishop Andrews, had declared James to have been inspired by God. They preached passive obedience to the worst tyranny." [3] The crown claimed the right to dictate the people's faith and the form of their worship, thus arrogating to itself some of the prerogatives claimed by the Roman church, against which the reformers protested in the previous century. The liberating truth, therefore, which Luther had proclaimed was again needed, and it was again revived.

Furthermore, a new emphasis was laid on the doctrine of the divine sovereignty. The king was the head of the church as well as of the state. Men were awed by the sacredness of their sovereign. Doubtless many of his subjects deemed it a much more serious matter to offend against him than to sin against God. The sovereignty of the king was real; its sanctions were real, and were being suffered by many in their own persons

[3] Green's "History of the English People," Sec. 989.

and in their estates. When, therefore, the Puritans proclaimed that God was the head of the church, and that conscience was answerable only to him, this revival of the truth of the divine sovereignty made God a living God; it made his law real and its violation heinous. Thus the faithful preaching of an obscured Scriptural truth, precisely adapted to the peculiar needs of the times, aroused the conscience and awoke the religious life of the nation.

The Eighteenth Century.

The next great revival was that in which the Wesleys and Whitfield were the great figures.

The reaction which followed the Restoration led to a rapid moral deterioration. George II. illustrated the licentiousness of the court and Walpole the corruption of the government, while indecencies, immoralities and barbarities abounded among the people. Religion had lost all spirituality. Isaac Taylor

calls the church of this period "a fair carcass;" and Blackstone says that he went to hear every preacher of note in London, and that there was not one whose discourse indicated whether he was a follower of Confucius, or of Mohammed, or of Christ. Religion seemed to consist in its outward and formal observances. The great spiritual truths of Christianity were neglected. There was a profound lack of spiritual earnestness. The teachers of religion had little experience of its power. Wesley himself had been in the ministry thirteen years, and had served as a missionary in Georgia for two years before he had a deep experience of the spiritual truths of the gospel. He tells us in the journal of his homeward voyage that he "who went to America to convert others was never himself converted to God."

His conversion took place just after his return to England, and from that time on "he had a forgotten gospel to preach—the gospel by which men were to be converted, as he had

been, and to be made 'new creatures.'" [4] "The doctrines which Wesley revived, restated and emphasized in his sermons and writings are present personal salvation by faith, the witness of the Spirit, and sanctification." [5] Thus historians of Methodism refer to a new life, beginning with a new birth, as "revived" doctrines, "a forgotten gospel."

Evidently these neglected Scriptural truths were precisely adapted to the religious and moral needs of the times, and when they were faithfully proclaimed the great awakening of the century came.

The First Half of the Nineteenth Century.

Among the notable evangelists identified with the great religious movements of the first half of the nineteenth century Charles G. Finney was the central figure.

The doctrine of the divine sovereignty had

[4] Encyc. Britannica, art. "Methodism."

[5] Dr. H. K. Carroll in Schaff-Herzog "Encyc. of Religious Knowledge."

triumphed. In this country the church had no head save Jesus Christ. Conscience was accountable to God only. But the doctrine of the divine sovereignty was held in such a way as to destroy all appreciation of human freedom, resulting in a widespread paralysis of conscience and will. Multitudes were waiting with folded hands for God to come and convert them.

Then Finney thundered forth the neglected truth of man's free agency and guilt, and the retribution due to sin. He aimed at the conscience and will, and never ceased to emphasize the responsibility of the sinner. He says in his autobiography, "Instead of telling sinners to use the means of grace and pray for a new heart, we called on them to make themselves a new heart and a new spirit, and pressed the duty of instant surrender to God." [6]

This message, which is as old as the Hebrew prophets, had been so long neglected that it

[6] "Memoirs," p. 189.

was forgotten and seemed new when Mr. Finney began to proclaim it. Its precise adaptation to the peculiar needs of the times was shown by the results of its application. Conscience was so aroused that men were utterly overcome by its terrors. On one occasion, when preaching in a school-house, he tells us that an awful solemnity settled down upon the congregation and people began to fall on the floor and cry for mercy. "If I had had a sword in each hand," he says, "I could not have cut them off their seats as fast as they fell." And in a few minutes nearly the whole congregation were either on their knees or prostrate. Similar manifestations of overwhelming conviction were not uncommon.

Thus again did neglected Scriptural truth, which precisely fitted religious and moral conditions, awake the sleeping conscience of multitudes.

The revival which began in 1857 and continued until 1860 may be called a sort of con-

necting link between the great awakenings of the first and second halves of the century, though in type it rather belonged to the former.

The Last Half of the Nineteenth Century.

During the first two-thirds of the century profound changes took place, unparalleled in the history of civilization. The industrial revolution had produced radically new conditions. Men had begun to live at a much more rapid pace; they were being driven by the new machinery which they had produced. Steam and electricity had proved to be whip and spur. Life had become much more intense. A change gradually took place in the nervous organization, and men grew keenly sensitive to suffering. Philanthropic movements multiplied. Men became more considerate of dumb animals than their grandfathers had been of human beings. It was only a few generations since the most enlightened court in Christendom had sentenced men to be boiled

to death in oil. Now cruelty to a horse or a dog was a crime.

Such a change in human sensibilities could not fail to demand a modification of the stern theology of the Puritans. The "terrors of the Lord" had been the chief reliance to persuade men.

When the great religious awakenings came, in which Mr. Moody was the leader, a new note was heard. It was the long neglected doctrine of the love of God. Not only had the nation become more keenly sensitive to suffering, but it had just passed through the baptism of war. There had been one smitten in well-nigh every home. Millions of hearts were longing for consolation. At such a time and under such conditions the tender truth of the love of God could melt hearts which no blows could break. This Scriptural truth, long obscured by theology, was precisely what was needed; and notwithstanding the headlong rush of business, men stopped and turned aside to

hear that "God so loved the world." This message persuaded multitudes who had become indifferent to the staple presentations of the pulpit.

Again the preaching of neglected truth peculiarly adapted to the times made God and the great spiritual verities real to men.

Be it observed, Moody did not repeat the message of Finney, nor did Finney repeat that of Wesley, nor Wesley that of the Puritans, nor did the Puritans simply reiterate the great doctrine of Luther and the Reformation. Each dealt more or less with the great body of Christian truth, of course, but each had a distinctive message, which was peculiarly adapted to his own times and, therefore, made God real to the men of his generation. Nor did the prophet of one age employ the methods of his predecessors. Though the substance was the same, the form and method were new because the times were new. The men who to-day expect to reproduce Moody's results by repro-

ducing his message and his methods will fail as completely as Moody would have failed, if he had been a mere imitation of Finney. Such men, as the author of "Ecce Homo" says, are plagiarists rather than prophets. The true prophet sees God in his own times and in relation to the peculiar needs of his own day, and thus makes others see him.

The new form of the message arouses opposition and very likely attracts stones, but when results demonstrate its truth and its power, the next generation builds the prophet's sepulcher.

If the above brief review of the great awakenings of the past four hundred years sustains our generalization, does it not afford a reasonable basis for future reckoning? And if neglected Scriptural truth precisely adapted to the peculiar needs of our own times can be pointed out, is there not a strong presumption that the next great spiritual awakening will come when this truth is faithfully preached?

It is quite obvious that the great questions peculiar to our times are social. The industrial revolution has produced a social revolution; we have passed, within three generations, from an individualistic to a social or collective type of civilization. Relations which a hundred years ago were few and simple are now become many and complex. New questions concerning rights and duties are being asked. Society is gaining self-consciousness, which marks one of the most important steps in the progress of the race. We are beginning to see that society lives one vast life, of which every man is a part. We are gaining what Walter Besant calls "the sense of humanity." We are discovering that life is something larger and farther related than we had thought; and with this perception of wider and multiplied relations comes a new sense of social obligations. That is, a social conscience is growing, though as yet it is uninstructed.

The wonderful increase of wealth and of

knowledge during the past century has served to create a new discontent and to kindle a new hope. It has transferred the golden age of the world from the past to the future; and this golden age, yet to come, constitutes a new social ideal.

In the succeeding chapters it will be shown that the social ideal of Jesus is precisely what is needed to inform and spiritualize and perfect this new social ideal, and that the social laws of Jesus are precisely what is needed to educate the new social conscience.

III

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

THE SOCIAL IDEAL OF JESUS

THERE is taking place a "rediscovery of Christ" which is of profound significance. This return to the Master means a clearer conception of his character, a truer understanding of his teaching, a larger comprehension of his mission, a more loyal surrender to his authority. It means also the gaining of Christ's point of view.

What we see depends very largely on the point from which we look. When we gain a new point of view, of course the landscape itself does not change, but our apprehension of it

does. Some objects become more prominent, some less so; some disappear altogether, while some new features are seen. So in the world of ideas, established truths of course remain fixed, but with a new point of view our mental perspective changes; truths are seen in new relations; some assume greater importance than before, and some less; we gain some new ideas, and some old conceptions drop out of sight.

It makes a great difference what our point of view is. The largeness of our vision and the accuracy of our knowledge are conditioned by it. The eye may be held so low that a stump will hide a mountain; and the higher we rise, the more distinctly do the great features of the landscape stand out, and the more perfectly do we comprehend their relations to each other.

Now no Christian surely can doubt that Jesus occupied the correct point of view, that in his perspective truths were seen in their

right relations and true proportions; and it is certain that his great theme was *The Kingdom of God.*

His very first public utterance related to the kingdom. After the record of his temptation, we read: "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. iv. 17). The Sermon on the Mount, which has been called his great inaugural address, referred to the kingdom repeatedly, beginning with its opening sentence. In that discourse he states and repeats the condition of entrance into the kingdom, tells who will be greatest and least in it, and gives practical illustrations of the spirit of obedience required of its members. We learn further that the kingdom was his habitual theme: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. iv. 23). And again at a later period we are told that "Jesus went about all the cities and

villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. ix. 35). He sent forth the seventy, who, whether accepted or rejected, were to proclaim everywhere: "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you" (Luke x. 1-11). He commissioned the twelve disciples, and his charge to them was: "As ye go, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. x. 7). He declares that he himself was sent to preach the kingdom of God (Luke iv. 43). When the disciples asked the Master to teach them how to pray, after the words, "Hallowed be thy name," the very first petition was, "Thy kingdom come." From the later words, "Give us this day our daily bread," it appears that this was intended to be a daily prayer; that is, we are taught to pray daily for the coming of the kingdom. And if we ought to pray for it daily, we ought to work for it daily; so the Master thought, for in the same discourse he said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God"

(Matt. vi. 33). This does not mean, as has been so often supposed, "First become a Christian." Seeking the kingdom does not mean trying to enter the kingdom. Jesus has just been saying, Do not make provision for your natural wants the great concern of life. After these things do the nations seek. That is, the nations make food and raiment the great object of daily concern, but do you make the kingdom of God, and its extension in the world, the great object of your daily endeavor, and then all these things shall be added. "Seek ye first the kingdom" means seek it first to-day and to-morrow and all the time. Prayer and endeavor should always keep step. If either lags behind the other, both suffer detriment. Thus Jesus teaches that the kingdom is to be the first subject of daily prayer, and the first object of daily effort.

The parables of our Lord are largely occupied with the kingdom, its nature, its exceeding value, the method and conditions of its growth,

its comprehensiveness, its final triumph. Its many aspects are represented by many comparisons. The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field (Matt. xiii. 24). It is like a grain of mustard seed (verse 31); it is like leaven (verse 33); it is like treasure hid in a field (verse 44); it is like a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls (verse 45); it is like a net cast into the sea (verse 47); it is like a certain king which would take account of his servants (Matt. xviii. 23); it is like a householder (Matt. xx. 1); it is like a king which made a marriage for his son (Matt. xxii. 2); it is like ten virgins (Matt. xxv. 1); it is like a man travelling into a far country (Matt. xxv. 14).

The whole book of Matthew is no longer than many popular lectures. One can read it in an hour and twenty or thirty minutes; and yet in this one book Christ refers to the kingdom no less than forty-five times, and in the synoptic Gospels over a hundred times.

That the kingdom was Christ's habitual subject of discourse is shown by the fact that his instruction is called "the word of the kingdom" (Matt. xiii. 19), and that explaining his teachings to the disciples was making known to them "the mysteries of the kingdom" (Matt. xiii. 11), and that when they understood his teachings they were "instructed unto the kingdom" (Matt. xiii. 52). This moreover was the message which they were to carry to the ends of the earth. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations" (Matt. xxiv. 14). After his passion, during the interval between his resurrection and ascension, his theme was still the same, for we are told (Acts i. 3) that he was seen of the apostles forty days, "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Evidently, from first to last, the burden of his discourse was the kingdom.

It is clear, then, that to misunderstand the doctrine of the kingdom is to misunderstand

the message of Jesus, it is to misunderstand Christianity, it is to misunderstand the mission of the church, it is to misunderstand Christ's interpretation of life; and the doctrine of the kingdom has been misunderstood for centuries. The conception of the kingdom of God, even among Christians, is generally vague and very commonly erroneous.

Thus appears the profound significance of the return to Christ, the rediscovery of the kingdom of God. I venture to think it is the most thought-compelling, the most zeal-inspiring, the most world-transforming of all the great movements of this wonder-crowded age.

From the point of view of this rediscovered kingdom the Bible must be restudied,[7] and our conception of Christianity must be reconsidered, and history must be reinterpreted, and theology must be rereasoned, and our philosophy of

[7] For an admirable study of the Bible from this point of view see "The Kingdom of God," by F. H. Stead.

life must be reconstructed,[8] and church methods must be readjusted, and the industrial system must be reformed, and society must be reorganized. All this is involved in the new Christian renaissance.

The common belief in the kingdom of God has been much like many men's belief in immortality—something ghostly, mysterious, intangible and vague, and, so far as each individual man is concerned, something future, very remotely related, if at all, to the hard facts of every-day life. Such a belief, of course, could have no appreciable influence on character or conduct.

Many have supposed that the kingdom of God was identical with heaven, the home of the blessed dead. This mistake is doubtless due to the expression so common in the Gospel of Matthew, the "kingdom of heaven," which is synonymous with the "kingdom of God."

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[8] For a philosophy of life from this point of view see my "The Times and Young Men."

By those holding this view the importance attached to the kingdom in the teachings of Christ is understood to emphasize the importance of gaining heaven. To seek the kingdom is to seek heaven, and to enter into it is to gain heaven at last. The great object of endeavor is to "save the soul." It results naturally in a subjective type of religion, and an individualistic Christianity. It is acknowledged that Christians have duties to their fellows, but it is exceedingly difficult to arouse them to earnest and sustained activity in behalf of others. If religion is deep enough to become the real business of life, that business is to gain heaven. Many have, therefore, separated themselves from the world, and have sought heaven by way of the hermit's cave and the cell of the monk. Instead of conquering the, they ran away from it.

This conception of Christianity finds its most perfect exposition in the wonderful allegory of Bunyan. Christian leaves his city to

its destruction and devotes his life to gaining a destination of personal safety.

Another extremely common misconception of the kingdom identifies it with the visible church. Thus the church, instead of being a means to the kingdom as an end, becomes an end in itself. It devotes itself to its own upbuilding. It says to men, "The church needs you." It sets apart ministers, priests, elders, deacons and deaconesses "for the service of the church." People are urged to attend church in order "to support its services." The usual question with church-extension societies is, What is the best location for the proposed church? Where will it soonest reach self-support? The thought is not, Where will the church best serve the community, but where will the community best serve the church?

Now Christ pleased not himself. He came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister." How completely, then, does a self-seeking

church misrepresent its Master? This is one of the chief reasons why the church has lost its hold on the multitude. Workingmen generally believe that the church is selfish, that it seeks them for its own sake rather than theirs. I am sure their conclusions are too sweeping, but I am equally sure that there is too much ground for them.

Identifying the kingdom with the visible church results in the sin of ecclesiasticism, and the wretched strife of sectarianism. Men quarrel over "my" church and "your" church and the "true" church, but we never hear of "my" kingdom or of "your" kingdom. The kingdom belongs to Christ; and that is the supreme end, to which the church is only a means. If men had remembered this, they would have seen that citizenship in the kingdom is more than membership in "my" church or "yours." When a church is thrust in where there are too many already, it grows, if at all, at the expense of the kingdom. This

is because ecclesiasticism "seeks first" the denomination instead of the kingdom, imagining that they are identical.

Further, the identification of the kingdom with the visible church has led to the corruption of the latter. It is evident enough that within its membership there are tares and wheat growing together; and when it is proposed to gather out the former, men quote Christ's words concerning the kingdom, "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest" (Matt. xiii. 29, 30).

Another common error is to identify the kingdom with the *invisible* church, which in its effects is much the same as confounding it with heaven. It serves to make the kingdom intangible, and, therefore, to many minds, unreal. As the result of this view the church ignores the physical; and to the multitude it does not seem concerned with real life; hence their estrangement from it. The social as-

pects of Christianity are lost sight of. The church has no mission to society. A representative of this view writes me, "We have but *one errand* in this dispensation—that is to do as the apostles did—preach the gospel of eternal life to individuals. . . . I keep at the only work I am commissioned to do, 'getting the jewels out of the mud-puddle,' not trying to clean up the mud-puddle"; which is an extremely happy illustration of the folly of such a course. There is many a miry slough in the world where countless precious jewels have been lost forever, which would have been drained and converted into good productive soil for the benefit of humanity, if the church had only understood the true doctrine of the kingdom, and had recognized her social mission. As the kingdom was understood to be something wholly spiritual, physical evils were not seen to stand in the way of its consummation. The numerous "mud-puddles" have, therefore, been allowed to stand. They were

seen to be evils, but evils that had "come to stay," on which, therefore, the church should waste no time, all of which should be devoted to getting individual souls into the kingdom, which is as invisible as its synonym, the invisible church.

Each of the errors above referred to, like all long-lived and influential errors, is a half truth; and a half truth is usually much more dangerous than a whole lie, because it is so much more plausible and more tenacious of life. A lie that is unadulterated is soon found out by people who love the truth, but a half truth may be hugged by an honest man, who sees the honest half of it, and defended to the extreme of fanaticism.

It is a mischievous error so to identify the kingdom of God with heaven, or with the visible church, or with the invisible church, as to make it coextensive with any one of them, for it is more comprehensive than all of them. To narrow the extent of the kingdom

is to narrow the teaching of Jesus, to narrow the meaning of Christianity, and to narrow the mission of the church.

It is notable that both Jesus and John the Baptist began preaching the kingdom without any definition of it, and for the obvious reason that the "kingdom of God" was an expression quite familiar to their hearers. Jesus had much instruction to give concerning the kingdom, but he began with the current conception of it and without correcting it.

Truths always mean more to the teacher than to the scholar. No teacher can teach all he knows. But there can be no communication of truth whatever unless teacher and scholar have some ideas in common. If the subject under discussion means to the teacher one thing and to the hearer quite another and wholly foreign, there can be no instruction. Not until the learner has got hold of the teacher's idea, at least in part, can instruction enlarge and correct and perfect the conception.

If, then, the conception of the kingdom of God, which was common among the Israelites when Jesus began to teach, had been wholly foreign to his own, his declaration that the kingdom of heaven was at hand would have been either quite misleading or quite meaningless; he could have given no instruction without defining what he meant by the kingdom. He, however, assumed from the first that the expression was understood. What, then, was the common understanding of it?

Israel was founded as a theocracy. Moses, the founder of the nation, was only the representative of Jehovah, who was king. For hundreds of years the nation was governed by judges; their king was their God. Distrustful of the sons of Samuel, the people clamored for a king like all the nations; and the Lord said to Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (I. Sam. viii. 7).

The arms of David subjugated neighboring

kings, and he established what was for that age a powerful empire (II. Sam. viii.; I. Kings iv. 21-24).

The idea of world dominion—an idea which all of the great nations of antiquity sought to realize—dawned on the mind of Israel; and the Davidic empire—extending in the national vision until at length it embraced all peoples, ruled from Mount Zion by one of David's royal line—became the national conception of Jehovah's kingdom or the kingdom of God.

No one can understand the prophets and their messages who does not bear in mind that the kingdom of God was the continuous thread of thought running through the centuries, on which the pearls of prophecy were strung. The prophets were the spokesmen of Jehovah, instructing the nation concerning the character and government of their invisible King, denouncing their sins as rebellion against him, daring even to rebuke the king, exhorting the

nation to repentance and renewed loyalty, and promising blessings, temporal and spiritual, to the obedient. Every revival of religion was a revival of patriotism, a renewed loyalty to Jehovah as God and as King.

As they gained more exalted conceptions of God, they gained nobler conceptions of his kingdom. At first it was little more than a political ideal, but in the progress of two and a half centuries, through the teachings of successive prophets, there came the conception of *justice* (Amos), of *mercy* (Hosea), of *forgiveness* (Micah), of *faith* and *redemption* (Isaiah), of personal relations to God and *individual religion* (Jeremiah), and of *regeneration* (Ezekiel). It should be observed, however, that in the prophetic vision of the coming kingdom of God, spiritual blessings were not substituted for material good, but superadded; there were to be universal righteousness, and knowledge of God, and joy in him, and an irradiation of divine glory, but

these were to be accompanied by peace among the nations, the increase of population, health, long life, and boundless plenty.

Thus it appears that the matured prophetic conception of the kingdom of God, fully come in the earth, was that of a world-wide society, in which universal obedience to the divine law, administered by the Lord's anointed, would bring universal blessings, spiritual and temporal; or, in one word, the kingdom of God realized would be an *ideal world.*

When the age of prophecy passed, the conception became less spiritual. It was still that of an ideal world, but of course the nation's ideal degenerated with the nation; and at the beginning of the Christian Era the overthrow of Israel's enemies and the establishment of his worldly power was the most important part of the future kingdom.

Now Jesus declared that this ideal world, the kingdom of God, was at hand, its realization was begun. He knew full well the

popular conception of the kingdom, and, knowing it, he said in his "inaugural address": "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfil" (Matt. v. 17). If this means anything, it means that Christ had come to make actual the prophets' vision of the kingdom of God. His ideal was far nobler than that of his hearers, and it was to be realized by means very different from what they expected, but the kingdom of God which he preached and commissioned his disciples to preach was the ideal world, the perfected world-society, the social ideal, which the national prophets had heralded for centuries and had foretold that the Messiah would inaugurate.

If a Christian and a Mohammedan discuss together the subject of heaven, each understands by it the eternal home of the blessed dead, though their conceptions of perfect blessedness differ radically. But notwith-

standing the difference in their ideals, each means by "heaven" the ideal life of the other world. In like manner Jesus talked with the Jews concerning the kingdom of God. Their ideals of that kingdom differed widely, but each meant by the expression an *ideal world—this world perfected.* To the Jew of that generation this world would not be ideal unless he had his foot on the neck of his enemy; to Jesus it would not be ideal unless man loved God supremely and his neighbor as himself.

From David to Christ no Israelite thought of the kingdom of God as beyond the clouds. Such an idea would have been utterly foreign to the national conception. We know that the Jews located the kingdom in the world. Nor are we left to inference as to the teaching of Jesus on this point. When his disciples asked him to explain the parable of the tares, he told them that the field in which tares had been sown was the *world* (Matt. xiii. 38). At the harvest these tares would be gathered

out of his *kingdom* (Matt. xiii. 40, 41). This definitely and explicitly locates the kingdom in the world.

But it is objected that Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jno. xviii. 36). The word "world" is used in different senses in the New Testament. John writes: "Love not the world. . . . If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I. Jno. ii. 15). He also writes: "God so loved the world" (Jno. iii. 16). The more we love the "world" referred to in the former passage, the more we shall be unlike God; the more we love the "world" referred to in the latter, the more shall we be like Him, who so loved it that he gave his only begotten Son for its redemption. In the latter sense, the word means the earth and its inhabitants, "The world and they that dwell therein." In the former, it means the kingdom of evil, of which Satan is the prince (Jno. xii. 31; Matt. xii. 26), with which the kingdom of Christ is in

deadly conflict, and which it will ultimately overcome (Rev. xi. 15). It was this world —the kingdom of evil, whose members resort to violence—to which Christ referred when he said: "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight" (Jno. xviii. 36).

But definitely locating the kingdom of God in the earth does not exclude heaven from it. That would seem to be included by the words in which Christ declares that his hearers would see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and themselves thrust out (Luke xiii. 28).

It now becomes necessary to distinguish between the *extent* of the kingdom and its *content,* which will be done in the following chapter.

IV

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—(*Continued*)

ITS EXTENT AND ITS CONTENT

THERE has been much vagueness and confusion of thought because of failure to distinguish between the *extent* of the kingdom and its *content*. In the broadest sense, its extent is as wide as the whole universe of God, but for us it practically includes simply the earth and heaven; while in content the kingdom includes only those who have come into harmony with the will of God. When, in the Franco-Prussian war, the German soldiers were laying siege to Paris, they were included in the French empire geographically,

but they did not belong to it. In like manner, the kingdom of God includes the whole world in extent, but in its content it embraces only those who have surrendered themselves to its laws. Thus it is primarily a spiritual kingdom into which men enter by a spiritual birth (Jno. iii. 3), but at the same time it has its physical aspects which, as we shall see, are profoundly important. We speak of the world of thought. In extent, it includes every material thing on which thought has been expended. At a great exposition of industry and art, you shall not find an article which does not show more or less evidence of thought. On some great painting or statue years of study have been spent, but neither canvas nor marble can enter or "inherit" the world of thought. Thus the kingdom of God is a kingdom of law, as wide in extent as the reign of law, and, therefore, including the physical world as well as the spiritual. But it is also, and primarily, a kingdom of glad

obedience to law, and, therefore, one of "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost" (Rom. xiv. 17)—a kingdom which "flesh and blood cannot inherit" (I. Cor. xv. 50) any more than a stone can enter or "inherit" the world of thought.

It is accordingly made clear that heaven and earth (all nature) and the church, visible and invisible, are all included in the extent of the kingdom, while its content embraces heaven, the invisible church, and only such members of the visible church as have been regenerated. Many enter the visible church without any experience of the new birth, but no one can enter the kingdom of God without being "born from above" (Jno. iii. 3). But the content of the kingdom of God is more than its membership. It is a heavenly ideal; as Bruce says: "The kingdom of God, in one view of it, is an ideal hovering in heavenly purity above all earthly realities"—an ideal craving embodiment; and the kingdom comes

in the earth just so far and fast as this ideal is actualized.

Many writers have recognized the fact that while the kingdom is spiritual, there is a sense in which it is physical; but no one, so far as I know, has made the distinction clear or has shown the importance of the physical; and generally the physical aspects of the kingdom are quite ignored.

Olshausen says that the kingdom of God, conceived in the widest sense, is both "outward and inward." Van Oosterzee says that it "embraces heaven and earth." President Bascom calls it "the synthesis of the universe of God, physical and spiritual." Westcott tells us that "The kingdom of God is at once spiritual and historical; eternal and temporal; outward and inward; visible and invisible; a system and an energy," and Prof. Peabody says: "We are brought, then, to the apparently paradoxical conclusion that the kingdom of God had to Jesus both significations, that of a

future and that of a present state, that of a heavenly and that of an earthly society."

In the above distinctions, all characteristics or elements of the kingdom which are described as "outward," "visible," "the earth," "the physical universe," are included in its *extent* though not in its *content;* and it is the outward and visible aspect, the physical element, which I desire to emphasize, not because they are the most important, for they are the least important, but because they are the most neglected.

We have already seen that by the expression, "kingdom of God," Jesus meant and his hearers understood *an ideal world.* The spiritual element in the ideal of the latter was insignificant, if indeed it had any existence; but in the ideal of Jesus it was the supreme element; and because he so emphasized it, many have lost sight of the physical altogether, and have spiritualized all his teachings; as if "deliverance to the captives" and "liberty to

them that are bruised" meant the spiritual emancipation of those who are bound and bruised by sin, and as if "recovering of sight to the blind" meant the opening of blind spiritual eyes.

The physical sustains much the same relation to the spiritual in the kingdom of God that it does in man. The spiritual is incomparably the more important, but when you get rid of the physical, all that is left is ghostly and has little to do with this world.

Jesus made no such mistake. He knew that there could not be an ideal world without the removal of physical evil; hence his constant concern for the blind, the lame, the sick, the hungry. When we are told that he went about all Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom, it is added, "and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease" (Matt. iv. 23). When he commissioned the twelve disciples to preach the gospel of the kingdom, he added, "Heal the sick, cleanse

the lepers, raise the dead" (Matt. x. 8). When John the Baptist doubted whether Jesus were indeed the Anointed of God, come to inaugurate the kingdom, Jesus said to the messengers, "Go and show John those things which ye do hear and *see*" (Matt. xi. 4). There was *visible* concrete evidence of the coming of the kingdom. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. xi. 5). All this was literal, not figurative. Jesus had compassion on the multitude, not only when he saw that they were "as sheep having no shepherd" (Matt. ix. 36), but also when he saw that they had "nothing to eat" (Matt. xv. 32). When, after Jesus had risen from the dead, he saw his disciples at the sea of Galilee, he spoke of love and of feeding his lambs and sheep, but it is significant that his very *first* word was, "Children, have ye any meat?"

(Jno. xxi. 5). Probably some interpreters would say that he meant spiritual food, but for the fact that he provided a substantial breakfast for the hungry fishermen, who found it waiting for them when they got ashore.

Jesus ever insists on the spiritual—the transformed character—not because it is necessary to win heaven, but because it is necessary in order to win the world; his eye is fixed on the earth, not on the skies. Men must become meek, not because the meek alone enter heaven, but because they "inherit the *earth*" (Matt. v. 5). His followers are become "light," not that they may gain a heaven of light, but that they may enlighten the *world* (Matt. v. 14). They have become "salt," not that they may find a place among the saved, but that they may salt and save the *earth* (Matt. v. 13).

Jesus taught the reality of heaven, and the certainty and blessedness of its rewards, but heaven occupied little space in his teachings.

They dealt chiefly with this world and with life here in this world. He evidently believed that the best way to fit men for heaven was to bring heaven down to earth and to get men acclimated to it right here.

The common conception of religion which fixes attention on heaven as the great desideratum, which makes this life simply a probation, and the "salvation of the soul" its great business, is entirely foreign to the teaching of Jesus. And this misconception is due to having forgotten or misconceived the kingdom of God, to having lost sight of the fact that the great burden of Christ's preaching was an *ideal world.*

When we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we immediately add, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. vi. 10). This latter petition I understand to be Christ's interpretation of the former. A little later in the same discourse he added: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into

the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father" (Matt. vii. 21). He enters into the kingdom, or the kingdom enters into him (which is the same thing), who does God's will. It follows, then, that the kingdom comes here in the earth just so fast as God's will is done in earth as it is in heaven; that is, perfectly.

To teach us a prayer which is never to be answered, and which it is impossible to answer, would be to mock us cruelly. We are, then, warranted in believing that the earth is to be brought into as complete subjection to the will of God as is heaven itself. This is a prophetic prayer, which will certainly receive its fulfilling answer; and that will certainly make an ideal world, which will be the kingdom fully come.

Now how much is implied by perfect obedience to the will of God? Law is an expression of the will of the governing power. God's will is embodied in his laws. When

that will is done in earth as it is in heaven, then God's laws will be perfectly obeyed in all the earth. But is God's will expressed only in the moral law? What of the laws of nature? Are they not God's laws? If not his laws, whose are they? If the laws of the spiritual world are God's laws, why not those of the physical world?

No believer will deny that the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms are God's; and if his kingdoms, why not his kingdom? They are not unrelated and foreign to each other. They are built one on another; are parts of one plan, and, together with the spiritual, constitute one great whole. Wherever God's laws obtain, there God reigns; and wherever God reigns, there is his kingdom. "His kingdom ruleth over all" (Ps. ciii. 119).

It is not pretended that the expression kingdom of God was used in this broad sense in the time of Christ, or that obedience to the will of God was then understood to include

obedience to natural laws. There was of course no knowledge of natural laws in that age of the world; our conception of nature was utterly foreign to that generation. But if, by the prophets of science, God has made a revelation to us which sheds new light on his relations to the world, and if that new light enriches Scriptural expressions, shall we reject the larger meaning because it was unknown to the men of Bible times?

The Psalmist said, "The Lord God is a sun" (Ps. lxxxiv. 11). But how insignificant was his knowledge of the sun compared with ours? He knew that it gave heat and light, and that was all he knew. He did not know of its attracting power; he had never conceived of its magnitude, and did not dream that it was the center of a vast system of circling worlds. He did not know that it lifted the clouds into the sky and painted them with the glory of the morning and evening, or that it gave to the cataract its beauty and

power. Science has enriched this Scriptural metaphor for us a thousand-fold. Shall we reject this added meaning because it was unknown to the Psalmist?

David said: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. xxiv. 1). But how large was David's world? It could hardly have been as large as that of Herodotus, who lived some five hundred years later. He resolved when a young man to write the history of the nations, and to visit them before writing. He acquainted himself with the islands and coasts of Asia Minor; he visited Egypt, Palestine and Phoenicia, and penetrated as far east as Babylon and Susa; he also coasted along the shores of the Black Sea, and came to the conclusion that the earth was an island with a diameter of about fifteen hundred miles from east to west. Are we to infer that only that little world which David knew belongs to the Lord, or has the meaning of his declara-

tion enlarged with man's enlarging knowledge of the earth?

The Master's parting charge to his disciples was, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel" (Mark xvi. 15). "All the world" in that day meant the western fringe of Asia, the northern fringe of Africa and the southern fringe of Europe. Those regions measured the obligations of the disciples who received the charge; but do they measure ours? In like manner, whole continents of meaning have been added to the prayer, "Thy will be done." We now recognize all natural laws as expressions of the divine will, whether in the physical, intellectual or spiritual world, so that the words, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," mean to us perfect obedience to all the laws of body, mind and spirit, resulting in a perfected manhood—a body, worthy to be the temple of the indwelling God, more beautiful than any sanctuary ever reared by hands; a mind, transparent to truth,

and like the diamond radiant in its light; a heart so pure that its unsullied consciousness reflects the face of God. They mean perfect obedience to all the laws of the social organism, and, hence, the perfecting of society, the sanctifying of all human relationships and institutions—a civilization whose life is righteousness and whose law is love. These words mean the paradox of nature's laws obeyed and, therefore, nature conquered—no more sickness, no more want, but the paradise of plenty, health and peace, foretold by the ancient prophets of Israel. They mean the New Jerusalem, come down "from God, out of heaven"—heaven itself, but heaven on earth; not men dwelling with God in a heaven above, but God dwelling with men in a heaven below (Rev. xxi. 3, 4). They mean the kingdom fully come, the ideal world of Jesus actualized.

F. Herbert Stead has pointed out that the words, "The kingdom of God," both in the Aramaic, which Jesus spoke, and in the Greek

of the New Testament, mean literally "the Royal Rule of God." And this Royal Rule, as it is realized in the responsive attitude of its subjects, he thus happily describes: "A fellowship of Christ-like love which is to include every soul that is willing to enter! A community which embraces every other true community of men, which contains and controls the home, the state, the economic system, the fellowships of science, letters, art. A holy society already in the midst of men, already shedding its brightness over human life, yet shining more and more unto the perfect day; a kingdom progressively realized on earth, perfectly fulfilled in heaven. A girdle of love destined to clasp into unity the whole of mankind, whatever the race, the color, the culture, and to bind all to the throne and heart of the Universal Father!

"Is not the arrival of such a society a glorious piece of intelligence? Is it not indeed good tidings of great joy? Among all the

dreams of social perfectness which the fertile mind of man has flung forth, you will not find one to equal this of the kingdom of God; its breadth, its height, its completeness. And it is no mere dream; it is a fact in process of growing fulfilment. Gladdest of all glad tidings, it is open to all!"[9]

[9] "The Kingdom of God." Second Part, p. 70.

V

THE KINGDOM OF GOD—(*Continued*)

COROLLARIES OF THE TRUE DOCTRINE

CONSIDER now some inferences and results which naturally follow the true doctrine of the kingdom of God.

1. That kingdom is the synthesis of the spiritual and the physical; and the correlation of the two composes many an ancient quarrel.

Truth is a sphere; and though it has opposite poles, it is still one. But men can see only a hemisphere at a time; hence the many and long-lived disputes over half truths. One sees only the ideal; another, only the real. One fixes attention on the inward; another, on the

outward. One would save the soul; another strives for the body. One says, Change the man's inner life, and he will change his surroundings; another says, Transform environment and you will transform character. And while they bring railing accusations against each other, the world waits and suffers.

Both parties to the unending dispute are right and both are wrong. Each is right in the half truth which he accepts, and each is wrong in the half truth which he rejects. Why not put the two hemispheres together, and let the world roll on? This is precisely what the true doctrine of the kingdom does. In it the spiritual and physical, the ideal and the real, the inward and the outward, the soul and the body, are not set over against one another as if unrelated and even antagonistic. They are seen to be parts of one whole, wonderfully interrelated, and each profoundly influencing the other.

One of the most serious mistakes of the

church has been to ignore the physical—a mistake she would never have made if she had followed the example of her Master. Devoting herself exclusively to the spiritual, she is like a mother who in her anxiety to save her child's soul neglects his food, clothing, exercise and cleanliness, with the result that there is not left much of a soul to save.

The rapid growth of "Christian Science," so-called, is a reaction from a Christianity which ignores the physical, and, therefore, does not recognize the interrelation of soul and body; precisely as Unitarianism was a reaction from an orthodoxy which practically ignored the humanity of our Lord; and reactions are naturally one-sided and extreme. The remedy for them is to preach the well-rounded truth. We are slowly learning, by costly experience, that no great Scriptural truth can be safely neglected; sooner or later it appears in caricature.

In our work for the coming of the kingdom

in the world, we should give to the physical the same place in our thoughts, our plans, our methods, which it has in the thoughts, plans and methods of God. Let us recognize its value as precisely what it is. It is mischievous either to overestimate or to underestimate its importance. To make the physical supreme is to accept the "philosophy of dirt," and to plunge into the mire of materialism; while, on the other hand, to ignore it is to attempt to build a superstructure without a foundation.

We do not yet appreciate to how great extent physical conditions control moral progress. If we wish to determine effects, we must command causes; and science has shown that many phenomena in the spiritual world spring from causes in the physical. The harvest is seen waving in the air and the sunlight, but its roots are down in the ground.

A friend of mine, an Episcopal rector, decided a few years ago to make a study of tenement-house conditions at first hand. In

midsummer he took quarters in "Hell's Kitchen," one of the worst tenements in New York. He awoke from his first night's sleep with a severe headache. The second morning found him with a sore throat. Fearing he was about to be sick, he went into the country, where a few days of pure air restored him to a normal condition. He returned to the tenement with a repetition of his former experience, except that the effect of the poisonous air became gradually less obvious as the system accommodated itself to it. Half a dozen times, during the summer, he went back and forth between city and country, and each time with a like result; thus demonstrating that the headache and sore throat were caused by the foul air of the tenement. He observed that each morning he awoke in "Hell's Kitchen" every nerve in his body was crying out for some stimulant; and he said it required all the self-control he possessed not to go into a saloon and call for a glass of whisky.

Now the ordinary dwellers in that tenement have not the established habits, the strong convictions and the trained will of my friend; and the result is that they probably take the glass of whisky. Moral suasion is impotent with bad ventilation.

The following incident was received from the late Charles Dudley Warner, who had made a special study of prisons and prison discipline. At the Elmira Reformatory, some years ago, the physician in charge asked to have a number of the worst incorrigibles turned over to him. Eleven of the toughest cases were selected; they were young fellows who would neither work nor study, and who resisted all persuasion, whether moral or corporal. The physician first gave them Turkish baths. Perhaps he thought he could sweat out of them some of the "original sin." Then he made a careful study of their food, and fed them scientifically, meanwhile giving to them systematic physical training. In a few weeks'

time nine out of the eleven had voluntarily sought admission to some class for intellectual improvement. The higher nature had been reached through the lower.

What if the specialist in diseases of the eye or lungs or heart knew nothing of general anatomy? The man who knows only one organ of the human body knows none at all. Now, body, soul and spirit do not live apart, uninfluenced by each other, any more than the separate organs of the animal organism live separate and independent lives. Modern science has demonstrated that the physical, intellectual and moral elements in man are most intimately related. It is practically impossible to elevate one of these elements while the others remain degraded.

Precisely here do we discover the radical defect of former philanthropic, religious and educational methods. They have generally been addressed to only one element in man; hence very limited success. To disregard an

important factor in any problem is to invite failure. To leave out of the account a large fraction of the man is unscientific.

For the social settlement to neglect the spiritual is even a greater blunder than for the church to neglect the physical. There is a common impression that unless social settlements are non-religious they will estrange Jews and Roman Catholics. This has been demonstrated to be a mistake. When settlement workers make no use of religion, they neglect the longest lever for the uplifting of the people.

What if Christ's Apostles had reasoned as do many modern Christians? "We know that the cross and the Crucified are to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Gentiles foolishness. We will, therefore, say nothing of either. We will live Christian lives before all, we will show a Christian spirit, we will do all the good we can in every way, but we will not preach Christ and him crucified lest we alienate

the very ones we wish to help." Such surreptitious Christianity could never have produced a Christian civilization. When those who are trying to uplift humanity have gained the true conception of the kingdom, they will neglect neither the spiritual nor the physical; and they will find that the latter, correctly understood and wisely used, becomes a means for reaching and influencing the former. A correct understanding of the kingdom of God, therefore, serves to counteract the existing tendency to materialism.

2. Again, the true doctrine of the kingdom points out the relations of God to natural law.

When the world was young, natural laws were of course unknown. All nature was instinct with divine life; her movements were the activities of the gods, whose caprices accounted for whatever was unexpected. The Israelite ascribed to the will of Jehovah all the processes of nature. The Old Testament is full of this conception, and it is unmistakable

in the New. God makes his sun to rise (Matt. v. 45). He sends his rain (Matt. v. 45). He feeds the fowls (Matt. vi. 26). He clothes the grass (Matt. vi. 30). This was the first stage, marked by the simple faith of childhood.

A second began with the discovery of natural law; and wherever law could be traced a personal will was no longer seen; only the extraordinary, for which science was as yet unable to account, was referred to the divine will; and at length, when the reign of law was seen to be universal, many quite excluded God from his universe. But we are now entering on a third stage, in which men are beginning to see that natural law is not a substitute for the divine will, but an expression of it. Will without law and law without will are equally false and equally true. Each contains a half truth, and the two together make up the rounded whole of *will through law.*

In the first stage there was the confidence of untried faith; in the second, the triumph of

unbelief over an unintelligent faith; in the third, the triumph of intelligent faith over unbelief.

Our faith in God is not faith in an almighty magician or in an omnipotent fairy. We do not conceive of him as breaking into the course of nature or as setting it aside. Nor do we think of him as sitting apart from the universe and watching it as he might watch an infinite clock, which he had wound up and left to run down. God is immanent in nature and active in human affairs, purposing, guiding, overruling, accomplishing. Nature's laws are not obstacles to him, but rather instruments. Are we to imagine that he is less the master of these laws than is man? Prof. Tyndall used to pour mercury into a red-hot crucible, and in a few minutes from that crucible, still red-hot, he would empty the mercury a frozen lump. He accomplished this result, not by violating nature's laws nor by setting them aside, but by an intimate knowledge and skillful

use of them. The course of nature is not fixed to the limited intelligence of man; why should it be fixed to the infinite intelligence of God? We boast that nature's forces have become our servants, which run to and fro in the earth to do our bidding; and are we to suppose that God is the helpless slave of our servants? Then is man mightier than the Almighty!

A misconception of the kingdom usually involves a misconception of the world. Those who fail to recognize the physical aspects of the kingdom are very apt to suppose that nature, if it does not belong to the kingdom of God, is a part of the kingdom of this world, and somehow antagonistic to God. Nature seems to come between him and us, and to hide him from us. But when we learn that the kingdom includes the physical as well as the spiritual, and that they are so intimately related that each influences the other, we see that he can control either only as he controls both, and that his laws embrace the one as

well as the other; that he is God of the whole universe, and not of a fraction of it.

Thus nature becomes the drapery which hides and yet reveals the Infinite One. We see that her processes are his methods; her harmonies, his reason; her beauties, his thoughts; her wonders, his wisdom; her forces, his power; her laws, his will.

This view recognizes God in history; it makes room for divine providence in all the incidents of daily life; it affords a reasonable basis for prayer and confirms our faith in it. In short, it makes God real and brings him near, which is precisely what we all need. The life which has no consciousness of the present God and Father is orphaned, and beggarly poor and blind; is lived within reach of strength which it never appropriates; is lived in the very presence of peace and comfort and blessedness, which it never knows; is immersed in a divine glory, which it never sees.

Science by discovering the laws of nature

reveals the divine methods, and enables us, by adopting them, to become efficient laborers together with God unto the kingdom, and to have the inspiration of that blessed consciousness.

3. Another inference from the true doctrine of the kingdom is the sacredness of the so-called secular. The old and false and lamentable distinction between the "sacred" and the "secular" is based on the supposition that there is a line of cleavage running through life which divides it into that which relates to God, the eternal life, the soul and religion on the one hand, and on the other, that which relates to the world, the present life, the body and the temporal. The former are "sacred," the latter are "secular"; and between the two groups there is supposed to be a natural antagonism. Thus there is enmity between God and the world, and conflicting interests between the life to come and this life, between soul and body, between things religious and things temporal.

This pernicious misconception of God, of life, and of religion is possible only in connection with a radically wrong conception of the kingdom of God. When we see that Jesus came and lived and died that God's will might be perfectly done in the earth; that is, that this might be an ideal world, when we see that this life is to be perfected like the other, that soul and body are mutually dependent, that the spiritual and the physical alike belong to the kingdom of God, that the temporal may be and ought to be religious, that every act, whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, should be done to the glory of God, then we see that there is no room for the so-called "secular," and that whatever cannot be done to God's glory and the upbuilding of the kingdom is forbidden and unholy.

"There are no gentile oaks, no pagan pines;
The grass beneath our feet is Christian grass."

4. Again, the true doctrine of the kingdom

of God makes obvious the true mission of the church.

The church is the body of which Christ is the head. The body and its members are instruments of the head, and are intended to execute its purposes. The church was organized to carry on the work which Christ began. If her great object in the world is different from his, then she is disloyal to her Master. If the great object of his endeavor was the kingdom of God, then the church must be but a means to the kingdom as an end. An erroneous conception of the kingdom leads to an erroneous conception of the church, and a narrow conception of the kingdom results in a narrow conception of the mission of the church.

If the kingdom were synonymous with heaven, then would it be the mission of the church to get individual souls safely transported from earth to heaven. If it were exclusively spiritual, sustaining no relation to the

physical except that of antagonism, then would the church rightly devote herself exclusively to the saving of souls. If the kingdom were identical with the visible church, then would the church properly devote herself to her own upbuilding. This represents the actual conception and practice of most churches. Indeed, for many generations the kingdom has been lost sight of and the church has taken its place. The pulpit has had as little to say of the kingdom as Jesus had to say of the church, and it has had as much to say of the church as Jesus had to say of the kingdom.

When it is generally understood that the kingdom and the church are not the same, and that the latter is only a means to the former as an end; and when it is generally seen that the kingdom is this world idealized, and that the kingdom comes just so fast as Christ's ideal for the world is actualized, then the church will change her aims and adapt her methods accordingly; she will seek to save

men rather than *souls,* and she will endeavor to discharge her mission to society as well as to the individual. She will discover that it is much wiser to clean up the "mud puddle" so that the jewels will no longer get lost than it is to devote all of her time to recovering a small proportion of the lost jewels.

The church's narrow conception of her mission has resulted in an unholy divorce between religion and morals, between Christianity and philanthropy. Our relations with God cannot be right, if our relations with our fellow men are wrong. Religion which is immoral is irreligious; and morals which are irreligious are immoral. The Christianity which is not philanthropic is as defective as the philanthropy which is not Christian. Now the kingdom of God is the synthesis of religion and morals, of Christianity and philanthropy. When, therefore, the church apprehends the true doctrine of the kingdom, she will no longer put asunder what God has joined together.

The very common misconception that her own upbuilding is the proper mission of the church is due to identifying the church with the kingdom, or to losing sight of the kingdom altogether; and it is chiefly responsible for the unseemly strifes of sectarianism. There are many churches; there is but one kingdom. As long as the churches seek each to upbuild herself, they will be rivals, and will draw apart. When they all seek to upbuild the kingdom of God, they will become allies, and will draw together. When we emphasize citizenship in the kingdom far more than membership in the church, it will be a long step toward Christian union. In his last message to the church Philip Schaff said: "The reformation of the sixteenth century ended in division; the reformation of the twentieth century will end in reunion." But the new reformation will not be well begun until the church gains the true conception of the kingdom of God.

5. Again, the true doctrine of the kingdom affords the greatest possible inspiration.

Our best hours are a revelation of what life may be when the spiritual dominates, and we become conscious of high fellowship with the Highest. If we could only keep ourselves up to our best selves, could only make our supreme hours habitual, we should abide with the Master on the Mount of Transfiguration. But we may build no tabernacles there; we descend from the Mount and find society struggling with many demons which must be cast out. These are the devils of selfishness and meanness, of vice and crime, of besotted ignorance and low-mindedness, of injustice and oppression; and how many a stout heart has lost courage in the presence of such sin and woe? And how often does the sense of God and of his power and love grow distant and dim? We need abiding inspirations which shall make us strong and patient, and which like vestal virgins shall keep the sacred flame

of faith and zeal ever burning. Such inspirations come from the true doctrine of the kingdom.

It affords the inspiration of the widest possible outlook. Thoreau says: "Our horizon is never quite at our elbows." But the horizon of the man in a pit is only large enough to take in the hole where he is. Lifting a man out of the pit of selfishness to the mountain-top whence can be seen with the eye of faith the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord is like transferring a man from the bottom of a well to the top of the Matterhorn. He finds himself in another world, the grandeur and beauty of which he had never conceived. We grow or shrivel to the measure of our desires and purposes. If they are centered in self, we become narrower as we grow older. As our thoughts, our desires, our aims are fixed on a small object, we take a narrow view of life. Whatever concerns us is magnified; all else is minimized; thus is our perspective

vitiated and shortened; and as character is intensified with age, our horizon becomes ever more contracted.

When, on the other hand, the kingdom of God becomes the first object of daily and hourly endeavor, the whole world comes into view. Our thoughts, our desires, our hopes, our endeavors are enlarged to include all races, all nations and all future generations. God's working plan is revealed to us; we discern meaning and purpose in the processes of nature and in the ongoing of history. We become interested in all that ministers to the progress of civilization. Whatever concerns humanity concerns us. All things have become ours, for we are heirs of the kingdom, "having nothing and yet possessing all things" (II. Cor. vi. 10). As an organized society, the kingdom is a whole, and every part serves every other part. Thus the movements of civilization on the other side of the globe—things great and small, the Suez Canal and the toil

of a peasant—touch us and interest us, because as citizens of the kingdom we have a proprietary right in the whole.

Under the divine direction of Him, to whom has been given all power in heaven and earth, the myriad forces of society are working for the great consummation. The selfish plans of governments, the machinations of politicians, the schemes of competing corporations are all being overruled for the kingdom; the million are unconsciously furthering it; the mighty engines are harnessed for it, the looms are weaving for it, the mills are grinding for it; it is the outcome of all activity, the goal of all progress.

The great laws of the universe meet in your backyard and may be studied there. The pebble and the grain of sand influence the sun and the stars. In like manner the ordinary and the narrow in life are widely and nobly related, so that the every-day round and the commonplace are glorified with new meanings

and new motives when they are seen to be a part of an all-embracing plan, which God is now working out in the world.

The true doctrine of the kingdom affords the inspiration of a glorious ideal and a firm confidence that it will surely be realized. This doctrine has no room for any "necessary" or "permanent" evils. It bids us recognize every existing evil, and never doubt that each is doomed. The kingdom of God is Utopia made rational and destined to be made actual. It is the new social ideal perfected. It is the New Jerusalem, come down from God out of heaven and resplendent with his glory. The certainty of such a consummation inspires boundless patience and courage. On the banks of the Kuruman, in the density of African heathenism, Robert and Mary Moffat toiled on for ten years without a single convert. Four hundred miles beyond the frontier of civilization, alone in the midst of savages, their faith never faltered. At a time when there was

"no glimmer of the dawn" a letter was received from a friend in far-off England, asking if there was anything of use which could be sent. The significant answer of Mary Moffat was: "Send us a communion service; we shall want it some day." It came three years later, the day before the first converts were baptized.

The confidence of those who toil for the coming of the kingdom cannot be put to shame until the love and power and wisdom of God have failed.

This doctrine of the kingdom affords us the inspiration of the noblest fellowship.

If our aim is the upbuilding of the kingdom of God, and if our motive is love, then however obscure our work, or however unappreciated, whatever our disappointments or seeming failures, our aim and motive identify us with the prophets of old, with the great souls of every age, with Jesus, the Christ, with the Father himself, whose friends and co-laborers we are. We have with them the fellowship of the same

aim—an ideal world; we have the fellowship of the same motive—a disinterested love; we have the fellowship of the same spirit—that of joyous service and of glad sacrifice; we have the fellowship of the same great hope—a sinless and a tearless world; and we shall forever have the fellowship of the same joy—the blessed fruition of the kingdom fully come.

VI

THE SOCIAL LAWS OF JESUS

The rediscovery of the kingdom of God has been accompanied by the rediscovery of the social teachings of Jesus.

Some fourteen or fifteen years ago there was a meeting of New York clergymen who were especially interested in social problems, and who have been leaders in the readjustment of Christian thought and work, which is now in progress. There were about a dozen present, and among them were men of national and international reputation and influence. One of the leaders expressed his perplexity and regret

that he could not find in the teachings of Jesus any social laws! And what is still more surprising, the statement passed unchallenged, so completely had leaders of Christian thought lost sight of the social aspects of Christianity. Since then a shelf full of books has been written on the social teachings of Jesus.

When civilization was individualistic, men went to the New Testament for light on the problems of the individual, and found what they sought. When industry ceased to be individualistic and became collective it wrought a corresponding change in civilization. With this social revolution came the consciousness of social needs and the recognition of social problems; and when men went to the Bible for light on these problems, new light broke forth from the Word of God.

A social organization implies organizing principles, and a kingdom implies laws. Jesus laid hold of three fundamental social principles, and promulgated them as the funda-

mental laws of the kingdom of God, viz., SERVICE, SACRIFICE and LOVE.[10]

THE LAW OF SERVICE.

So comprehensive is this law that its span includes both the spiritual and the natural world. The obedience yielded to it by nature is unconscious and of course unmoral. It is a prophecy of a higher service which may be rendered or refused by conscious man. Wherever there is human association there is service of some sort. Roman civilization was based on the compulsory service of the slave. Our modern, industrial civilization is based on the compensated service of the employee.

This principle of service, illustrated in nature and in human society, Jesus laid hold of,

[10] For a fuller discussion of these laws, see my "The Times and Young Men," where a chapter is devoted to each. It is there shown that these laws belong to the natural as well as to the spiritual world, or that they are at least foreshadowed in nature; and that these universal laws, binding on both the spiritual and the physical, are doubly binding on man, in whom the spiritual and the physical meet.

ennobled, Christianized, and made one of the fundamental laws of the world society which he established. In service, as in all else that he required of his disciples, he himself afforded the supreme example. Though he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant (Phil. ii. 6, 7). He said to his disciples: "I am among you as he that serveth" (Luke xxii. 27). "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister" (Matt. xx. 28). "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord" (Matt. x. 24). "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (Jno. xx. 21). He was sent to minister; he sent forth his disciples to minister. And he taught that the final principle of judgment, to be applied to all nations, was that of ministration. In the picture which he gives of the last great court, men are acquitted or condemned according as they had served or failed to serve.

Jesus did not look on service as a disagreeable necessity which all should endure alike, or according to the ability of each, nor did he teach that it was to be rendered for compensation. It was, instead, to be regarded as a privilege. He found servitude a badge of dishonor; he made it the badge of distinction. "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant" (Matt. xx. 27). In the kingdom which Jesus set up, he who ranks all others is not he who knows most, nor he who prays most, nor he who enjoys the greatest ecstasies, nor he who is most served, but he who serves most. This distinction marks the law of service not as incidental, but fundamental in the kingdom of God.

It is important to make a clear distinction between commercial service and Christian service. In every civilized society there are a thousand services, an exchange of which is effected through the common medium of money, which represents them all. A funda-

mental law of commerce is that of demand and supply. Goods may be offered for sale which cost much time, skill and money, but if they are not wanted they have no commercial value. Another fundamental law of commerce is that of exchange—value for value. Markets may be glutted with the necessaries of life, and men may be perishing for lack of them, but, no matter how great men's need may be, if they have nothing to offer in exchange, business stagnates. These two laws of the commercial world fix attention, not on the motive of the service, but on the service itself and its proposed compensation. Motive and need are of no consequence except as they may affect the quality of the service or the demand for it. The essential thing is the act or the article which is offered for exchange.

Jesus, on the contrary, fixes attention, not on the act, but on the motive of the act. He devotes a large part of the Sermon on the

Mount to showing that in the kingdom of God the essence of obedience and disobedience is to be found in the spirit, motive and purpose (Matt. v. 20-48, vi. 1-18).

"He also serves who only stands and waits."

Commercial service aims to supply a demand; Christian service aims to meet a need. The former may be selfish; the latter is unselfish. The usual object of commercial service is gain; the object of Christian service is usefulness, and its natural reward is a larger opportunity to serve and an increased ability for service, together with the satisfaction of having served.

When a man is working simply for his wages or his salary, and he loses the same, his loss is complete. But if he is working to serve and fails to get his wage, his loss, however important it may be, is only incidental after all; his real object has been accomplished and that is his real reward. In like manner,

if a man is working for influence or fame, and fails to receive the recognition to which his services entitle him, he suffers defeat and disappointment. But if his object is to serve, he may congratulate himself on his success, though others wear his laurels, and he remains unhonored and unknown. They get the shell, and he the kernel. Their award is external and may be lost any day; while his is internal and eternal.

Of course I do not mean to imply that it is unchristian to receive compensation for service; but I do mean to say that the compensation should not be the predominant motive. Whether one serves for the sake of the kingdom or for the sake of the compensation makes all the difference between the Christian spirit and the commercial spirit. The Christian spirit receives, but in order that it may give; the commercial spirit gives, but in order that it may receive.

The Apostle Peter wrote: "As every man

hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I. Pet. iv. 10). The spirit of service recognizes every good gift that is bestowed on us by God's manifold grace, as coming under the law of stewardship. Our substance, our time, our powers, our opportunities are all entrusted to us for service. Life itself is a sacred trust. It has come to us from out the long past with its unspeakably precious store, garnered from every generation back to the beginning of life. What this treasure has cost in time cannot be reckoned; what it has cost in suffering cannot be conceived. This treasure is all that is contained in the wonderful word heredity. It has not been slowly and painfully gathered throughout the ages that we might squander it on our pleasures. We are its trustees for future generations, and are bound to hand on to them this precious legacy, not only unimpaired but enriched. The future of humanity depends on

the way in which each generation fulfills this trust. The whole life of every disciple of Christ is to be spent, like that of his Master, in the service of the kingdom, and in hastening its full coming in the earth. Such service implies self-abnegation; hence the second great law of the kingdom,

THE LAW OF SACRIFICE.

This law is all-comprehending; it includes the entire man. Jesus said: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke ix. 23). It is one thing for a man to *deny* himself, and a very different thing for a man to deny *himself*. No one wins success of any sort without some measure of self-denial. The champion of the prize-ring has denied himself many things; and has sacrificed his intellectual and spiritual growth to his physical development. But this is not Christian self-sacrifice. Nor is the sacrifice of every natural inclination

and the crucifixion of every noble desire in order to acquire wealth any more Christian. Again, a man may sacrifice body and soul to gratify his passion for knowledge or art. He is not so mean as the miser, nor so low as the prize-fighter, but his self-denial is no more Christian than theirs. In each case, one part of the man has been denied for the sake of another part. He has not denied *himself,* but only a fraction of himself. It is self-abnegation of which Christ is speaking. It is the death of self-will which he demands. This is made clear by the context. Whoever would be a follower of Christ must accept the cross. "That is one of the great words of the New Testament, but it has been belittled in common usage. We talk about our 'crosses,' meaning thereby anything that crosses our inclination. But the word never means anything so meager as that in the Bible. It never occurs there in the plural. It always means one thing, as the word 'gallows' means one thing, and that is

death."[11] When under Roman rule a man was sentenced to crucifixion he was compelled to bear his cross to the appointed place of death. To "take one's cross" meant to start for the place of execution. Let him "take up his cross and follow me." Follow him where? To Golgotha, whither he bore his cross, there to be crucified with him. The man who knows nothing of Golgotha knows nothing of Christian discipleship. If he refuses to bear his cross to Calvary, he forsakes the path which Christ trod. If he "saves his life" by avoiding the cross, he loses it; it is only by losing his life that he finds it (Luke ix. 24). If he would live, he must die. It is only as he dies to self that he enters into the kingdom of God by the new birth. Only when self-will is surrendered is sin surrendered, for self-will is the very essence of sin. A man may give up many *sins* without giving up *sin*.

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[11] "The Times and Young Men," p. 80.

The former is reformation; the latter is conversion. Giving up *sins* means new habits; giving up *sin* means a new life.

It is the will which determines character. The will is the essential man; so that the surrender of the will is the surrender of self, and nothing else is. A man may give his millions without giving himself. But

"The gift without the giver is bare."

There is nothing so hard for human nature as to preserve its integrity in dealing with God. We attempt to compromise. We offer him a part—a part of our time, a part of our endeavors, a part of our love, a part of our substance, and usually a very small part. If a man gives a tenth, he is considered a shining example of benevolence. But if God has a claim on one-tenth, he has precisely the same claim on the remaining nine-tenths. He did not one-tenth create us and we nine-tenths create ourselves. If he has any claim on us, he has all claim on us.

"Next to sincerity, remember still,
Thou must resolve upon *integrity;*
God will have *all* thou hast; thy mind, thy will,
Thy thoughts, thy words, thy works." [12]

Some people have a "self-denial week" every year. They are only one fifty-second part right. Every week ought to be a "self-denial week." Christ taught that there ought to be three hundred and sixty-five self-denial days every year. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross *daily* and follow me" (Luke ix. 23). He who follows Christ only one week in the year is not fit for the kingdom of God, for he turns back. The whole man is to be given to the service of the kingdom all the time. Nothing less is honest; nothing less is acceptable to God. He will not have any portion of a divided heart. In fact, when only a part is offered, no part is really given. When only a part is offered, it is offered for a consideration; and that is trading, not giving. If I

[12] George Herbert.

give in order to get, I am not giving at all, I am investing. That is commercialism, not Christianity. Jesus does not say that he who loses his life with a view to gaining it shall save it. Not "Whosoever shall lose his life for" his own sake, but for "*my* sake, the same shall save it" (Luke ix. 24).

In sacrifice as in service, the essential thing is not the act but the spirit. The spirit of sacrifice gives all, and longs for more to fill the measure of the world's sore need—gives all of self and all of substance. The consecration of all substance does not mean getting rid of all substance, any more than the consecration of life means the getting rid of life. It means the devotion of both to the service of the kingdom. All claim to ownership is renounced. The use of time and of substance and of powers is now simply a question of administration. Thus the law of Christian sacrifice, like that of Christian service, leads us to Christian stewardship.

It must not be supposed that insistence on the completeness of the sacrifice is in any respect arbitrary. It is in entire harmony with the universe of God. The oneness of the physical universe is perfect. There are no disorderly stars, no treasonable suns nor systems; no atoms rebel against the laws of their nature. There is perfect obedience, perfect order, perfect harmony; and this is the "music of the spheres," which began when the morning stars first sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

But in all this perfect obedience there is no moral beauty. Suns and systems cannot disobey. God, therefore, created wills. There can be no moral beauty without the obedience of wills which are free to disobey. Thus with the possibility of moral harmony came the possibility of moral discord, which is introduced by self-will. If a thousand men live each for himself, they have a thousand different ends in view, a thousand conflicting interests,

a thousand different wills, a thousand different centers; and as each life moves toward its own center it moves away from all the others. Thus selfishness is the great disintegrating force in the universe, and the cause of discord. Only when these thousand wills all have the same supreme object (that is, only when self-will has been crucified) can there be perfect organization around one center, and then there is perfect moral harmony.

The oneness of the universe is possible because its parts are interrelated and inter-dependent. Inorganic matter gives itself to the organic, the mould gives itself to the vegetable, the vegetable to the animal, the animal to man, man to God, and God is ever giving himself to the objects of his creation. Thus the divine order reveals a vast endless chain of receiving and giving, each link receiving service and sacrifice that it may give service and sacrifice. Of course unconscious matter and unintelligent life can give only unconsciously, as the stars

obey. But it is the high prerogative of conscious and intelligent man, like God himself, to offer conscious and intelligent service and sacrifice. When man is thus in glad harmony with the laws of his own nature and of the universe, he receives according to his need that he may give according to his ability; receives food that he may give strength, receives knowledge that he may give it forth as power.

Every man is daily made the world's debtor by a thousand ministrations from his fellows and from the ranks of nature below him. And if one receives, not that he may give, but only that he may enjoy; if he accepts the thousands of vegetable and animal lives sacrificed for him; if he benefits by the toil of his fellow men, which represents time and strength and life itself; if he appropriates all these, and, instead of transforming all into noble service and sacrifice for the common good, consumes them all on his mean little self, he dies a pauper, in debt to the universe. The

streams of service and sacrifice, which emptied into his life, were diverted from blessing the world, and perverted to pampering him; and, like rivers lost in the desert, they failed to fertilize his life.

Moreover, by refusing to give, he robbed himself as well as the world, for, under spiritual laws, to keep is to lose, and to give is to acquire. It was those who had surrendered all things to whom Paul said: "All things are yours." There is a divine and miraculous mathematics by which subtraction adds and division multiplies.

Because "it is more blessed to give than to receive," the more precious the gift, the more blessed the giving. And because self is most precious, the giving of self is the highest blessedness of which we are capable. When God demands surrender which is absolute and entire, he is not confiscating a life, "as though he needed anything." He would be something less than benevolent, if he demanded

less. He requires us to give that we may know the blessedness of coming into harmony with himself and with the laws of the universe; and he requires us to give all that we may know the highest possible blessedness.

Again, so comprehensive is this law of sacrifice that it includes not only the entire man, but the entire race. It knows no exceptions. God makes no class legislation. "If ANY man will come after me"; that includes rich and poor alike; the terms are all-inclusive. And not only must all sacrifice, but the measure of sacrifice is the same for all. God does not ask of any two the same *gift,* because to no two are his gifts the same; but he does require of every man the same *sacrifice.* To missionary and to millionaire, to prince and to peasant, the word is the same; "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not ALL THAT HE HATH, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv. 33).

This law of self-sacrifice, made to embrace all human beings, is the noblest tribute ever

paid to human nature. It would seem that among all peoples and in all ages there have been a few capable of the noblest self-sacrifice, willing to accept death for others; and such heroes have been honored as almost divine. Their luster shines down from a height deemed unattainable by ordinary mortals. But Jesus believed that the refuse of the race—the publicans and sinners, the thieves and prostitutes—were capable of this high heroism, capable of utter self-giving for his sake; and in no generation from that day to this has his sublime confidence been disappointed.

Selfish human nature in its most degraded representatives is surely capable of entering the kingdom of unselfishness. But how? Can self overcome self or flee from self?

"All others are outside myself,
I lock the door and bar them out,
The turmoil, tedium, gad-about.

"I lock my door upon myself,
And bar them out, but who shall wall
Self from myself, most loathed of all?

"If I could set aside myself,
And start with lightened heart upon
The road by all men overgone!

"God harden me against myself,
This coward with pathetic voice,
Who craves for ease, and rest, and joys.

"Myself arch-traitor to myself,
My hollowest friend, my deadliest foe,
My clog, whatever road I go." [13]

There is but one antidote for selfishness; and this brings us to the third great social law of Jesus,

THE LAW OF LOVE.

We have seen that service and sacrifice which are not unselfish are not Christian. In like manner there may be love which is not Christian, because it is not disinterested. There is a natural love, the evolution of which began with the struggle for the life of others, and its flower, as seen in family affection and in patriotism, is the most exquisite and noble product of nature, but there is an

[13] Christina Rossetti.

element of selfishness in it, which is quite obvious.

Disinterested love is divine; that is the love that God is. When that enters the heart, new life, divine life, eternal life enters it. Like all life, it is not evolved, but transmitted; and like all higher life, it comes from above. Dead matter is no longer believed to possess "all the power and potency of life." When inorganic matter becomes organic, it is because vegetable life has come down to it and lifted it over the chasm between life and death, which, of itself, it was powerless to cross. The process is inscrutable, but the fact is indisputable.

In like manner, the man spiritually dead becomes spiritually alive. The process is equally inscrutable, but the fact is equally indisputable. Not only do the phenomena of spiritual life appear where they had been absent, but there is the additional evidence afforded by the testimony of consciousness. The new life has not

been evolved; it began with a new birth, which, as Jesus said, must needs come "from above" (Jno. iii. 3).

We may trace matter from the inorganic form up through the vegetable and animal kingdoms to man; and it is to be observed that in each instance promotion is conditioned on a certain preparation, before life can come down to it and assimilate it, thus lifting it up to a higher kingdom, and making it subject to higher laws. As the grass must die to itself before it can live in the ox, and the ox must die to himself before he can live in the man, so man must die to himself before he can enter into a higher life, even the life of God.

I think it has been made evident in the preceding discussion that selfishness is the great enemy of the kingdom of God, the chief obstacle to the realization of an ideal world. We have seen that men must come under the laws of disinterested service and of unselfish sacrifice, if they are to enter into the kingdom

of God; and to the natural man this seems impossible, and *is* impossible so long as he remains unregenerate. If you ask inorganic matter to bud and blossom and bring forth fruit, you ask an impossibility, so long as it remains inorganic. It cannot obey the laws of the vegetable kingdom until it rises into that kingdom. But after it has begun to live, obedience to the laws of life becomes as wholly natural as it was before wholly impossible.

The selfish man cannot render disinterested service and make unselfish sacrifice; and he very likely scoffs at the idea of any one's doing so. He will have to be born from above before he can "*see* the kingdom of God" (Jno. iii. 3). But after he has died to self and risen into the new life of that kingdom, what was before impossible and inconceivable to him now becomes as natural and as beautiful as the unfolding of a flower.

Men cannot be moved without motives. The heart abhors a vacuum; the only way to empty

it is to fill it. If citizens of the kingdom of God do not serve and sacrifice for a selfish consideration, then they must do it for some other: and this other motive is furnished by disinterested love. That is the new and divine life, which lifts them into the new and divine kingdom, and makes them capable of obeying its laws. Thus, Christian love makes possible Christian service and Christian sacrifice. Indeed, they are only Christian love in action, its natural method of expression.

When a service is rendered for love, with a distinct consciousness of that motive, the more difficult or disagreeable or costly the service or sacrifice, the fuller and more perfect is the expression of love, and the greater, therefore, is the satisfaction. Love loves a hard task. It never chaffers; it gives all and longs for more to give. Thus Nathan Hale, when looking into the face of Death, exclaimed: "I regret that I have but one life to give for my country." And I venture to think that such men as Paul

and Xavier and Judson and Livingstone would willingly have given up immortality itself, if thereby they could have saved those for whom they gladly gave their lives. They lived lives of glorious sacrifice because they lived lives of glorious love.

Here we catch a glimpse of the true glory of God. We sometimes think of the divine glory as appealing to the senses, as if it were an effulgence which dazzles the eye, or as if it were the glory of knowledge, and of power, and of immensity, transcending comprehension and staggering imagination. But there is a more excellent glory, of which Jesus is the brightness (Heb. i. 3). When certain Greeks desired to see him, he said: "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified." The expectant disciples probably looked for some stupendous manifestation of power. Perhaps their Master would now assume regal authority and manifest kingly glory. The hour for which they had so long waited had at last come.

And the eager disciples hear these words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." He is speaking of being glorified and he is speaking of death. "He that loveth his life, shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal." Then as he sees close at hand the great hour for which he came into the world—the hour of his agony—his soul is troubled, and he prays: "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." And with the assurance that the supreme hour of trial should glorify God, he exultantly exclaims: "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die" (Jno. xii. 23-33). Glory, death! Glory, the cross!

The disciples' conception of his glory was very different. When the ambitious James and John desired to share it, they asked that they might sit one on either side of his throne when he should occupy it (Mark x. 35-38). And Jesus tells them they do not know that when they ask to share his glory they are asking to share his cup of death and to be baptized with his bloody baptism of agony.

At the Last Supper, Jesus said to Judas, "That thou doest, do quickly": and he went immediately out to make the bargain of betrayal. "Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him" (Jno. xiii. 27-32).

No prophet ever wrought such mighty works as Jesus, but it is not his miracles of power which fix the attention of a wondering world to-day. He spake as never man spake, but it is not his more than human wisdom which attracts men to-day. It is the Christ "lifted

up," who draws men. It is the cross which is the perpetual miracle of wisdom and of power —the wisdom of God to pour light into the black pit of human selfishness, and the power of God to lift men out of it.

The cross was not simply the supreme incident of Christ's life. In that wonderful high-priestly prayer, only a few hours before his crucifixion, he prayed: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me, . . . with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (Jno. xvii. 5). He was not asking for the glory of the Transfiguration, when his face shone as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light (Matt. xvii. 2). He was asking for the eternal glory which he had before the world was. And this prayer was granted. He was given the glory of the "LAMB, *slain from the foundation of the world.*" That was the glory which he had had with the Father. That is the essential, the eternal glory of God—the glory of self-giving; and self-giving is the uttermost

glory of God, because it is the most perfect manifestation of himself, because it is the uttermost expression of love.

During the reign of the Commune in Paris, the Roman Catholic archbishop was thrown into prison and condemned to death. In his little cell there was a narrow window in the shape of a cross. At the top of it he wrote, in pencil, "Height," at the bottom, "Depth," at the end of one arm, "Length," at the end of the other, "Breadth." It is the cross which measures the height and depth and length and breadth of the love of God, and that is the secret of its glory and of its power.

"Love thy neighbor as thyself" was an old commandment, as old as Deuteronomy. Jesus said to his disciples: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, *as I have loved you*" (Jno. xiii. 34). He loved them enough to die for them. The Golden Rule may well be the law of a normal society. But society to-day is abnormal, it is diseased,

it is sick with selfishness; and its one sufficient remedy is a sacrificial love.

Can men; common men, exercise such a love? In his prayer Jesus said: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them" (Jno. xvii. 22). The glory of self-sacrifice, which was given to Christ, he gives to his disciples, because he inspires them with his love. So that the mean, the ignorant, the bestial and besotted become capable of sacrificial love, because of the identifying power of love that makes them one with Christ (Jno. xvii. 22, 23).

Loving is self-giving; love gives itself to its object; hence mutual love is, as it were, the exchange of two selves, the identification of two lives. In former times, when friendship was narrower and more intense than it is now, men sometimes exchanged names, and ever after each was known by the name of the other, as if their very selves had been exchanged.

There is something like this between Christ and us. He called himself the "Son of man"

that we might call ourselves "sons of God." He became human that we might become divine. And when this exchange is perfected, it is the perfection of joy and blessedness, because it is the perfection of love.[14]

In marriage, the wife takes the husband's name, not for convenient identification, but rather to express identity. Their interests have now become the same, and more or less completely she lives his life. In like manner, unless we bear the name of Christ unworthily, we are called "Christians," because (more or less imperfectly, yet in some real sense) we are living his life, have the same supreme purpose, and gladly serve and sacrifice to hasten the coming of the kingdom.

When a man gives himself to God and lets God give himself to him, God's life enters into him, and he begins to enter into God's life,

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[14] Bushnell points out the fact that in the New Testament the word which signifies *love* is radically one with the word which signifies *joy*.

which is a life of service and of sacrificial love; and so far as men become one with God, they become one with each other. Thus love is seen to be the supreme social law, the great organizing, integrating power, precisely as its opposite, selfishness, is the great disorganizing, disintegrating, anti-social power.

And it is as certain that moral order will ultimately triumph over moral chaos in the world as it is certain that divine love is mightier than human selfishness.

VII

THE SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS NOT ACCEPTED

Archbishop Magee, of the Established Church of England, was reported, a few years since, to have said that the Sermon on the Mount was ideal, but altogether impracticable, and that if an effort were made to apply its teachings literally, "society would tumble to pieces."

The teachings of Jesus deal with man in his relations to God and in his relations to his fellow men. The first class are doubtless accepted by all Christians as binding. The second are some of them accepted and some

of them rejected or ignored. No one can compare these latter requirements with existing customs without seeing that in many instances there is no pretense of obedience even on the part of professed Christians; and it would puzzle most people to give any better reason for their neglect than established custom. Many have never thought of it; and accept the common interpretation of Christian duty as a matter of course. If a religious teacher attempts an explanation of the discrepancy between Christ's requirements and the accepted standards of Christian obligation, he tells us, like Archbishop Magee, that these neglected teachings of Jesus are "impracticable," or that they are "not applicable and, therefore, not binding." I understand a considerable school of earnest people to hold that the laws of the kingdom are not binding in this dispensation and will not be until the millennium.

No doubt the social teachings of Jesus will be obeyed when the millennium comes, that is,

when society is perfected and man's relations to his fellows are all that they should be. But by whose authority is the social legislation of Christ suspended for hundreds and thousands of years? Surely not by that of the legislator; and I know of no higher authority. That would be unique legislation which provided that its laws should become binding only after they were universally obeyed. Jesus nowhere hints that his legislation is to become operative only after it is no longer needed. The laws of the kingdom were promulgated when the kingdom was inaugurated; and these are the laws by which that kingdom is to be realized. It can come only so fast as they are accepted and obeyed. To say that the social laws of Jesus are not applicable in a selfish society, and will not become binding until society becomes unselfish, is like saying that the laws of health are not binding on a sick man, and will not be until he becomes well. The laws of health are remedial, and the sick man can recover

only by obeying them. Selfishness is the great social disease, and the social laws of Jesus were aimed at its eradication.

It is obviously true that the Christian life cannot be perfected without the acceptance of those laws, but Jesus insisted that without their acceptance it could not be *begun*. He himself perfectly obeyed the laws of service, sacrifice and love, and called for followers; making it perfectly clear, at the same time, that no one could become his disciple without accepting crucifixion, that as he came to serve, so his followers must serve, and that as he loved them, so they must love one another. These laws relate not simply to the consummation of the kingdom, they are placed over the gate of entrance.

What makes the Sermon on the Mount "impracticable" at the present time, or "inapplicable" to modern society? Is it the fact that obedience to its teachings would cost sacrifice? If so, were those teachings any more "prac-

ticable" when they were uttered? Did obedience cost any less when the penalty of discipleship was excommunication from the synagogue? Being "cut off from the congregation" then meant what extreme ecclesiastical discipline does not mean now. It had not only religious, but also political, social and commercial consequences. Its victim could neither teach nor be taught, could neither hire nor be hired, nor could he perform any commercial transaction beyond purchasing the necessaries of life. Discipleship must have been extremely inconvenient in such a society. Doubtless those who think it would overturn society to follow Christ now would have been of the same mind then, if they had been contemporaries of Jesus. In fact, I can think of no organization of society which would make it really convenient and agreeable to be crucified.

Supposing it to be true that the social laws of Jesus and our social system are a misfit, the question arises, are those laws to be changed

to fit society, or is society to be changed to fit the laws? If it be true that an actual application of those laws would cause "society to tumble to pieces," it is because society has been built on the shifting sands of human custom and not on the eternal rock of divine principle. The permanence of such a society is not problematical. But the Archbishop supposed a *literal* application of Christ's teachings. Blackstone says that the literalist "sticks in the bark"; and surely literalism is nowhere more superficial than in the interpretation of Jesus. On occasion he reproved his disciples for understanding him literally. As an Oriental speaking to Orientals, he freely used metaphor and hyperbole, which should not be forgotten in asking what he taught. The Oriental mind is imaginative, the Occidental is practical. An expression of the imagination, which would not be misunderstood by an Oriental, if interpreted literally in the western world, would be very liable to lead to extremes. In seeking to deter-

mine the binding force of Christ's example and requirements, it should be remembered that he lived in the midst of different social institutions and conditions; and we should inquire to what extent, if any, these differences rendered his requirements local and temporary. For instance, Christ girded himself with a towel and washed the feet of his disciples, and said they ought to wash one another's feet. But we do not consider that command binding on us. In the warm climate of Palestine men wore sandals. The wayfarer's feet, therefore, were travel-stained and were commonly cleansed before entering a house. To perform this act for another was regarded as menial in the extreme. When, therefore, Jesus washed his disciples' feet and bade them follow his example, the essential thing which he manifested and inculcated was the spirit of humility and of service.

This spirit is obligatory always and everywhere; its particular form of manifestation

will vary with circumstances. It is easy to insist on the unessential form and to let go the essential spirit; and this is the very worst and most offensive form of disobedience. Christ inculcates principles, and we do not grasp his teachings until we lay hold of the principles which underlie them. The particular application which he made of them to the men of his generation may have been local and temporary, but the principles themselves are universal in their application and eternal in their obligation.

When, therefore, we have grasped his principles, that is, when we understand what he really taught, nothing remains for the true disciple save implicit acceptance and unquestioning obedience. We are not at liberty to accept one and to reject another according to our humor. We dare not explain away or tone down. We may not consult custom nor convenience nor consequence. Results are none of our business. Like soldiers, we are to obey instantly, counting no costs.

To accept a part of Christ's teachings as authoritative and reject another part as "impracticable" is not only disloyal but absurd. We must either accept him altogether or reject him altogether, as an authoritative teacher. To do otherwise is to drag him down from his position as Lord and Master to a place beside Plato. If he was not authoritative, he was not divine, and none of his commands is binding. If he was divine, he was authoritative, and all of his commands are binding.

The three fundamental laws of the kingdom are not rules, which change with changing circumstances, but social principles, universally applicable and perpetually binding; and we have seen that the essential thing is not the act itself but the spirit and motive of the act. Whether, therefore, our modern, industrial civilization is Christian or not depends on its inspiring spirit and motive.

Is our industrial system informed by the spirit of Christian service? Professor Peabody

in his most valuable book, "Jesus Christ and the Social Question," says that business, as a whole, is a vast and complex movement of social service. He continues: "The creation of new forms of business proceeds, as a rule, not from the desire to rob the community, but from the desire to serve it; and in the main, the most rewarding forms of business are those which are based on the discernment of real needs and the supplying of real benefits."[15] This is undoubtedly true; but the crucial question is, What are the spirit and motive of the service which men desire to render? For we have seen that there is a radical difference between the commercial spirit and the Christian spirit. Commercialism renders service, it is true, but in order to receive service; and love accepts of service, but in order to give service.

During recent years, there have been in the industrial world many new and vast combinations. What has been the motive in forming

[15] Page 318.

the trust? In how many instances may we suppose it was urged that such a combination would make it possible to render to society a better service at a lower cost? A man who urged such a reason would probably be looked on by his associates as a hypocrite. It is quite safe to assume that the reason frankly urged was that there was "money in it."

Why are yellow journals filled with scandals, crimes, exaggerations and lies? Is it because the public needs sensation, or because a depraved appetite demands it, and money can, therefore, be made by supplying it? Why are millions of bushels of food transformed into noxious drink? Is it because men need rum, and to make it is to serve society, or because there is a demand for it which affords an opportunity for unscrupulous money-getting? Is anybody cultivating or manufacturing tobacco because he really believes he is thereby rendering a service to society? How about the billions of cigarettes made every

year? How about the rum traffic with Africa and the islands of the sea? Was opium forced on China because it was supposed she needed it? Why is real estate or any other form of property bought and held for a rise? Is it because any one supposes that the public needs to pay more for it? Why are there attempts to corner wheat and pork and cotton? Is the object to render service or to make money?

But let us turn to entirely legitimate industries. What is the question oftenest asked by the manufacturer and merchant? Will it serve? or Will it sell? What is the question uppermost in the mind of the average investor? Is it serviceable? or Is it safe? Will it promote the general good? or Will it pay good dividends?

Obviously the business world is organized on the competitive principle. Does any one imagine that the common object of this struggle is the greatest usefulness? If it is inspired by the desire to render unselfish service, why do

we hear so much of "cut-throat" competition? Does the persistent endeavor to undersell one's competitors spring from a burning desire to give the public the benefit of lower prices, or to get the benefit of increased business?

"All that the traffic will stand" is a common expression among business men. Does it mean the lowest possible charge compatible with good service, or does it mean the highest charge practicable without reducing patronage so as to impair profits? What gives the average business man pause when he is considering an advance in prices? Is it the fear that the higher figure will prove a hardship to the consumer, or is it rather that it will enable some competitor to undersell him and so take away his business, or that the higher price will so reduce demand as to curtail profits?

The great words of the old political economy and of the present-day business world are not *need* and *service,* but *demand* and *supply,* and the common use of these words indicates the

common purpose and motive of business. There are men in business who are inspired by the spirit of Christian service; men who are more anxious to provide work for their operatives than they are to make money; men who in times of industrial depression continue work at an actual loss rather than throw their employees out of employment. But it is undoubtedly true that there are comparatively few business men to whom the question of service is supreme, and the question of profits, however necessary, is secondary.

That our competitive industrial and commercial system is selfish and, therefore, unchristian is so palpably and grossly obvious that I hesitate to amplify the argument lest I seem to insult the intelligence of the reader; but the fact that the daily press and that intelligent and even Christian business men have controverted the above proposition leads me to continue.

In apprehension of the Christian law of

service, the business world is far behind the professional world. How much did we honor the soldier in the Civil War whose patriotism was kindled only by a generous bounty? What do we think of the teacher whose highest motive is furnished by his salary? What of the physician who disregards the cry of distress from the hovel, because he knows that the service would go unpaid? What of the artist who lowers his art that he may raise his income? What of the minister who is known to be mercenary? All of these professions are recognized as coming, at least in some measure, under the law of service; but by common consent the world of industry absolves itself from this law. The soldier, the teacher, the physician, the artist, the minister, whose supreme motive is pecuniary gain, is deemed unworthy of his profession; but we take it for granted that the object of a man in going into business is to make money. Most business men would be much amused at the idea of going into busi-

ness with any other motive. We often hear men say they are "not in business for their health," or "for fun," or "for philanthropy." The familiar dictum, "Business is business," waives all sentiment aside, and reduces every question to one of profit and loss.

There are many generous, many Christian men in business, who sincerely desire the welfare of their employees, and who use their profits for the noblest ends; but it has dawned on few that production and distribution are necessary functions in the great social organization to which they owe the service of their lives, and that it is their special mission by the best possible performance of these functions to extend the kingdom of God in the earth. But few have perceived that the proper object, the supreme object, of every legitimate business is not gain but service. There ought to be gain, of course, that the business man may live by his business, precisely as the man who preaches the Gospel should live by the Gospel;

but the merchant or manufacturer or mechanic whose object is gain rather than service is as unworthy of his calling as is the minister whose object is gain rather than service.

If the business man thinks I have misrepresented him, let us make a concrete application of Christian laws to his methods and motives. We will suppose that Jesus Christ returns in the flesh, and that he is given entire control of some great railway, the New York Central or the Pennsylvania system, or of the Standard Oil Company, or of the American Steel Corporation, or of the business of the average employer of labor. He is "the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever," the same who laid down the fundamental Christian laws of service, sacrifice and love, and would certainly administer the business in accordance with those laws. Would there be any change in the service of the public, any fall of prices, any rise of wages, any shortening of hours, any improvement in the conditions of labor?

Does any one suppose that it would be necessary to placard the fact in order to have it known to the employees and to the public that there had been a change in the management? Whatever change of policy there might be would precisely measure the present divergence from the Christian law.

If the average business man should hand his affairs over to the management of Jesus Christ for thirty days, what might he reasonably expect to find at the expiration of that period? His regular methods more vigorously applied, his lines extended, his business enlarged, his wealth increased, or would he be more likely to find himself bankrupt? If the latter alternative should prove to be the correct one, it would be because the existing system is out of joint with Christian methods and the Christian spirit.

I do not mean to imply that employers, as a class, are more selfish than their employees, or than professional men, or the general public.

There are selfish and unselfish men in all classes. I contend that our competitive industrial system is animated by a selfish spirit, and, therefore, by an unchristian spirit; and there are unselfish employers who find themselves victims of that system. The responsibility for it rests not with any one class, but with the general public, who insist on low prices without much regard to the methods by which they are made possible. From production to consumption, commerce is of course a series of buyings and sellings; and the spirit of selfishness in the consumer, who is the last buyer, insures the spirit of competition throughout the series; and it is the wage-earners, at the other end of the series, who feel most keenly the effects of this competition. When we place several marbles in a straight line and in contact with each other, if we hit the one at the end of the row, they all remain nearly stationary except the last, which rolls away. In like manner, the selfishness of the consumer at one end of the series

deals a blow which is conducted through all the series with comparatively little effect upon the intermediaries to spend its full force on the wage-earning producer at the other end.

I have sometimes been inclined to think we need one more society—an Anti-Bargain Brotherhood. Or perhaps it ought to be a sisterhood—at any rate I would not blackball the sisters, if they applied for membership—a society whose members would refuse to buy certain articles or to trade with certain men, because their prices are *too low*.

Human nature is very much the same in workingmen that it is in their employers. There is reason to fear that comparatively few are more interested in the kind and amount of service they render than in their wages. Masters and men alike need to be converted to the law of Christian service.

Industry is still in what Emerson called the "quadruped state." Business is still a struggle

for life, in which the weaker is made a victim. The time will come when will be recognized that other and co-ordinate principle, which Professor Drummond so happily emphasized, viz.: the struggle for the life of others. The old industrial doctrine that with certain legal restrictions the self-interest of each is a sufficient guide to the welfare of all is unchristian and, therefore, not permanent. When the kingdom of God is fully come in the world, I imagine that the Manchester school of political economy will have just about as much influence on earth as it now has in heaven.

It would seem to be sufficiently clear that our industrial system, although based on the exchange of services, is not inspired by the spirit of service, and, therefore, does not conform to the social law of service laid down by Christ.

But the question may arise whether professed followers of Christ generally obey that law. Whatever might be claimed by Chris-

tian men concerning their motives, it is quite certain the impression generally prevails that church-members and non-church-members are actuated by the same motives in business. If the real object of the former is to serve others, the secret is well kept; the world does not even suspect it. Indeed, there are men all around us who do not believe that such a thing as disinterestedness exists.

If in the business world, the professed disciples of Christ do not generally observe the Christian law of service, it is hardly necessary to inquire whether they obey the other Christian laws of sacrifice and love, which, if possible, make even higher requirements. Probably few men would profess to carry these motives into their endeavors to acquire property. To what extent, then, do self-sacrifice and love control its administration? Do professing Christians generally accept the claims of Christian stewardship, which, as we have seen, are made binding by the social laws of

Jesus?[16] Church-members talk of their "property" and of their "gifts." This is not the language of stewardship which simply administers a trust. It indicates a sense of ownership. Some (and they are among the most open-handed) speak of "the Lord's tenth," which means that they think of "their own" nine-tenths. How many have actually and consciously surrendered all their substance to God for the service of man, and are administering every dollar and every cent as they believe will best serve humanity and hasten the coming of the kingdom? There are such people, but it goes without saying that they are rare. Such consecration would be the rule instead of the exception, if the social laws of Jesus were commonly accepted. It is no more than he requires of every follower. "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not *all that*

[16] For an extended discussion of stewardship and of the relations of money to the kingdom of God see the author's "Our Country," chap. xv.

he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke xiv. 33).

Large sums, in the aggregate, are devoted to beneficence every year, but compared with the sore needs of the world and with the sums spent in self-indulgence, they are beggarly small. President Mark Hopkins said that self-denial was a doctrine that had faded from the consciousness of the church.[17] Not a few give like princes who also live like princes, indicating that they have failed to grasp the first principles of Christian stewardship. Many good and intelligent men justify their living in luxury by saying that it gives employment to many who would otherwise be thrown out of work, showing that they have failed to grasp economic principles as completely as they have failed to accept Christian principles.

Whenever we make a purchase we are directing the labor of one or more persons for a certain length of time. Does it make no differ-

[17] "Strength and Beauty," p. 301.

ence whether we direct that labor to the service of others or consume it on ourselves; whether it is employed on luxuries which minister to pride and effeminacy or on articles of real service to the world?

In earlier centuries it was believed, and with some show of reason, that the rich conferred a benefit on society by luxurious living, because it put money in circulation; and this notion survives long after the only ground which in any measure justified it has passed away. Formerly the rich, having no such opportunities to make investments as are now common, kept their treasure in a strong box, or perhaps buried it in the earth. As long as it was locked up it was of course unproductive, and practically did not exist. Doubtless it was better for society to spend it in luxury, thus by its circulation stimulating industry, than to let it lie idle. But if that was ever a necessary alternative, it certainly is not now. Even the typical miser of to-day does not hide away his gold,

he invests it; and his income from it is at once reinvested. An investment earns because it serves; and every wisely invested dollar serves the general public much more than it serves its owner. It is no longer necessary to spend in order to put money in circulation. When the rich man now spends money he withdraws it from circulation before he spends it.

No matter how great wealth may be, luxury can find no excuse, either economic or Scriptural, so long as the world is in want. Every expenditure upon self, large or small, should be made with a view to the greatest possible service to society, and in the spirit of self-denial.

Stewardship, of course, recognizes the divine ownership not only in our substance but in ourselves, and hence means the use of time and powers as well as possessions for the glory of God in the service of man. Doubtless most professing Christians would say that they had not thus consecrated themselves to help make

the world ideal; and not only so, but they would say they had never been taught that it was their duty so to do.

A Mormon elder once told me he thought I would be saved by my ignorance. If ignorance is a saving grace, then there is much hope for many of us, surely. We must make allowances for the fact that Christian men and women generally have not been instructed in the social teachings of Jesus. But ignorance of fundamental Christian truths, while it may in some measure exculpate them, certainly inculpates the pulpit. Is it not true that under the teaching of many pulpits to-day, commercialism and coveteousness exist in the church, self-satisfied and undisturbed? There is a great deal of preaching which does not trouble the conscience of men who instead of living to serve society are living to make society serve them, men who instead of living to give are living to get. Are not the preachers few who, like their Master, make the kingdom of God

the great burden of their teaching? Are not the preachers few who faithfully inculcate their Master's teaching concerning riches, notwithstanding those teachings are more needed to-day than ever before? Jesus said: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God" (Mark x. 23). That is, how difficult it is for the rich to enter into the kingdom of service, of sacrifice and of love, which is the kingdom of God. Jesus taught that it is only by a great miracle that a rich man enters into that kingdom (Matt. xix. 24). That is, it is a moral miracle when a man accustomed daily to have his own way does not grow willful and domineering, and when one, who has the means of gratifying his every whim, leads a life of daily self-denial.

As a result of the teaching or lack of teaching on this subject, church-members generally do not believe that the rich are in peculiar danger of being excluded from the kingdom; or, if they do, they are eager to take the risk.

They do not generally take Jesus seriously, when he said: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" (Matt. vi. 19), for that is precisely what most of them are doing, or trying to do. They do not generally believe that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," or if they do, they very resolutely deny themselves this greater blessedness.

If I mistake not, there is in the church to-day a great deal of ignorance, of superficial religion, of self-deception and of worldliness, for which the pulpit is largely responsible; and the difficulty lies chiefly in the failure of the ministry to apprehend, or to accept, or, at least, to inculcate, the social teachings of Jesus. The laws of service, sacrifice and love have been preached, but they have been applied to men in their Godward, rather than in their manward, relations. True religion has been believed to consist in right personal relations with God; hence the duty of serving *him,* of sacrificing for *him,* and of loving *him.* This is true of

course, but it is only a part of the truth. It has not been generally taught that the only way to serve God is to serve men, that the only way to sacrifice for God is to sacrifice for men, and that the only genuine love to God is that which inspires loving service and sacrifice in behalf of men.

If the only existences in the universe were God and a single soul, I know of no way in which that soul could offer service or sacrifice to God, "as though he needed anything." If God were something less than infinite, we might increase his well-being by service and sacrifice, but as he is self-sufficient, the only way we can serve him is by serving his children, and the only way we can sacrifice for him is by sacrificing for them.

When men forget the social character of these three fundamental laws of Jesus, there results a perversion of the Christian religion. The attempt to serve God without serving man produces ritualism; the attempt to sacrifice for

God without reference to man leads to asceticism and self-torture; the attempt to love God without loving man results in mysticism, each of which is a caricature of Christianity.[18] God in Christ identifies himself with man, and refuses to be separated from him. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," and "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me" (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

The assumption that humanity can be separated from God in the exercise of religion implies a misconception of the divine character. Men have inflicted on themselves an endless amount of suffering, which did not render the slightest service to humanity, imagining that they were offering acceptable sacrifice to God. They have supposed that sacrifice for its own sake was pleasing to him; as if a father could

[18] For the development of these points, see the author's "The Times and Young Men," pp. 167-183.

enjoy seeing a son torture himself! This is penance, which is heathenish, not Christian. Nothing surely is more pleasing to God than our self-denial and suffering for the sake of others. What delights him, however, is not the suffering, but the love which prompts it. To suppose that he can enjoy sacrifice for which there is no occasion, and which renders no service, is to suppose that he delights in suffering for its own sake, which is a hideous, heathen conception. Suffering can never be an end in the universe of a benevolent God, because suffering is not good in itself. Sacrifice must serve; if it does not, it is simply wasted suffering.

Because of the neglect of the social teachings of Jesus, it has become easy for men to think they have consecrated themselves to God, so long as they are not called on to test the reality of the sacrifice by devoting themselves to the service of humanity; easy for them to imagine they have given their substance to

God, so long as they are not expected to administer it (the whole of it) for the good of their fellow men. I used to know a man who was loud in his professions of religion, but when asked to give something toward the support of the minister replied: "Oh, no! I have given all that I possess to the Lord, and I have no right to give it to any one else." It is easy for men to persuade themselves that they love God, so long as it is a matter of mere sentiment, and they are not expected by themselves or by their church to manifest their love to God by lives of service and of daily sacrifice in the endeavor to make the world better. Thus self-deception has become easy and common, and has opened the church door to worldliness.

Any one who says that he trusts Jesus for his eternal salvation, and who "lives a moral life," would be admitted to almost any church, without having given the slightest evidence that he has complied with the conditions of Christian discipleship which Jesus laid down.

He may be perfectly square in all his dealings; he may be an affectionate husband and father, and a "good provider"; he may be open-handed to the poor, an obliging neighbor, and a respected citizen, and yet afford no evidence that his aims and activities do not end in himself.

He may never have died to the world; indeed, he may be very much alive to it. He may be living to get all he can out of it. The real object of every day's endeavor may be self-gratification. That self-gratification may take any one of a thousand forms, and may be high or low; or rather, it may be low or lower, for no delight, no endeavor which ends in self can be really high. It may be intellectual, or æsthetic, or even animal. It may be the satisfaction of accumulating, and the problem of every day may be how to add more to much. It may be the exultation of success, the delight of beating the other fellow, or it may be the love of power, which inspires his activities. It may be the pleasure of a luxurious life; and

he may build his palace with "costly deliberation," while all around him are scrimped and haggard lives, for which the Master became poor and died. And this man may ask from the church, and receive for the asking, a letter stating that he is a member "in good and regular standing."

Let no one imagine that I have the slightest sympathy with the hostile critics of the church. Any criticism I may offer is that of love and of a great longing that she may gain her Master's conception of the kingdom of God, and that she may accept in full his social teachings.

No one would maintain that the creation of an ideal world is the conscious aim of the average church to-day, or that the average pulpit inculcates the social laws of Jesus.

In reply to a criticism that Christianity was a failure, a writer in the *Atlantic Monthly*, some years ago, retorted that it was not a failure, for it had never been tried. Can it

be fairly said that a physician's treatment has been tried when one-half of it has been neglected? Only one-half of Christ's gospel has been preached, and Christianity has been only one-half accepted, only one-half applied. The salvation of the individual and the salvation of society are the two great hemispheres of Christian truth, both of which are alike necessary to produce the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

VIII

THE SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS APPLIED WILL BRING SOCIAL HEALING

"The number of relief and charity panaceas for poverty," says an English agitator, "are of no more value than a poultice to a wooden leg. What we want is economic revolution, and not pious and heroic resolutions."[19] New economic conditions are wanted, no doubt, but it is a new social spirit which is supremely needed. No mere reorganization of society is remedial. A change of form is not a change of essence.

[19] Ben Tillett, in *London Times,* Jan. 1, 1895. Quoted by Professor Peabody in "Jesus Christ and the Social Question."

Precisely here is the error of many reformers. They work from the outside in; they try to create life by organization.

> "Ah! your Fouriers failed
> Because not poets enough to understand
> That life develops from within." [20]

Jesus was not the Great Reformer, but the Great Regenerator; or rather, he was the former because he was the latter. He, indeed, aimed at a new social order, but it was to come from a new social life, emanating from himself. "I am come that they might have life" (Jno. x. 10). "Because I live, ye shall live also" (Jno. xiv. 19).

A sense of disappointment characterized the latter half of the nineteenth century, especially in Europe, that the high hopes which had attended the advent of free speech, a free press, popular education, and manhood suffrage, were realized so partially. Such measures are vastly important, but they will always be disappoint-

[20] "Aurora Leigh," Book II.

ing, so long as men try to substitute newness of condition for newness of life. The emancipation of Russian serfs and of American slaves has been disappointing. Each was a great act of justice, which will forever shed luster on the two great names associated with them, but there was a popular expectation of results from a new environment which could come only from a new life and a new spirit.

There are two essentials of healthy growth, first, *actual life,* and, second, *favorable* or *prepared conditions.* To neglect either is fatal folly. Conditions cannot create life; and life cannot grow or exist regardless of conditions.

It is life that organizes and therefore determines form, but, as we have already seen, dead matter must be *prepared* for assimilation and transformation. Animal life cannot assimilate inorganic matter; it must be prepared by the processes of vegetable life. Again, vegetable life cannot assimilate inorganic matter of the wrong sort or in the wrong form. The roots

of the rose-tree cannot transform rock into stem and leaf and petal until decomposition liberates its elements for new combinations.

Never before in the history of the world have conditions been so well prepared for the rapid and healthy growth of a new social life. Conservatism is like the rigidity which makes the solid rock impossible of assimilation to the rose roots. Only so fast as an old system is disintegrated can its elements be appropriated and vitalized by a new germinal principle. Now the new scientific method has been accomplishing this work of disintegration. The destruction of old theories and of fossilized beliefs has not only cleared the way, but has supplied a vast amount of *prepared material,* which, brought into contact with vital power, will be easily appropriated and assimilated, and thus *grow* into a new social organization.

The ideal society cannot be designed and constructed, because it is a living thing. We can get it only so far and so fast as we conform to

the laws of life. As Herbert Spencer says: "All phenomena displayed by a nation are phenomena of life, and are dependent on the laws of life." In order to secure the right kind of life, the first essential is to secure the right germinal principle. This done, growth may be quickened by supplying the conditions demanded by the laws of life.

In every living seed is a mysterious and potent something which determines its form of growth. Wrapped up in the acorn there is, so to speak, a vision of the oak, toward the realization of which is all its progress. This is its germinal principle, which differentiates it from every other kind of life and makes it absolutely certain that it will not grow into a pine tree or an elm. If the acorn were self-conscious, this "vision" of the future oak would be its ideal. Now society, as it gains self-consciousness, gains a social ideal, which, like a germinal principle, shapes its growth and determines its character. The man whose

ideal is the gratification of his appetites cannot possibly grow into a scholar or a saint, unless there is implanted in him a new and very different principle of life; and this is as true of society as it is of the individual.

The new social life, which came with the industrial revolution, is gaining self-consciousness and a social ideal. This ideal is largely materialistic. The solution of the problem of production has made possible an abundance for all. As the starving dream of feasting, it is not strange that those who have long suffered physical want should dream of a coming social system, in which the satisfaction of all physical wants will be the supreme good. The social ideal of the multitude is little more than a paradise of creature comfort. It needs to be elevated and spiritualized. It rightly includes perfect material conditions and perfect physical health, but their chief importance should be seen to consist in the fact that they are necessary conditions to perfect intellectual and

spiritual health. Perfect life can come only from perfect obedience to the laws of life. The highest possible social ideal, therefore, is that of an organization in which there is perfect obedience to all the laws of life, physical, intellectual, spiritual, social.

But, as we have seen, *this is precisely the social ideal of Jesus,* which will be realized when God's will (of which all the laws of life, physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social, are the expression) is "done in earth as it is in heaven."

With the development of the new social consciousness is coming the new social conscience. The two are closely related, and each implies the other. Not until we come to self-conscious man, in the rising scale of being, do we find a conscience; and not until society becomes self-conscious is a social conscience possible, and then it becomes necessary.

It may be said that the individual awoke to full self-consciousness at the time of the Ger-

man Reformation. Perception of the truth that every soul must give an account of itself unto God carried with it an inevitable consequence. If I have duties to God from which no man can absolve me, then I have rights of which no man must rob me. Imperative duties involve inalienable rights. Since the Reformation, therefore, the great struggles have been to secure and guarantee rights. To this end revolutions have been organized, wars have been waged, constitutions adopted and laws enacted. This has been the great object of struggle and the rich reward of achievement. The growth of democracy, the abolition of slavery, the elevation of woman and of the laboring man are the natural outcome of the new apprehension of rights, which came when the individual gained full self-consciousness.

The dawn of social self-consciousness means no less to the world, and marks a new era in the progress of the race. The close and multiplied relations into which steam and electricity

have brought us have made us interdependent. We are discovering that our interests are common, that our life is one. Relations are so intimate that unless each fits to his place and does his duty there is friction; hence a growing sense of responsibility, and a new perception of obligation. For four centuries the watch-word of reform has been "Rights," but, with the new social consciousness and the growth of the new social conscience, the watch-word of reform has become "Duties." Social consciousness is as yet blurred, and the social conscience is as yet feeble; but as the one gains distinctness the other will gain strength. This growing social conscience must be instructed.

The great social questions, which to-day are working like yeast, are ethical. They can be settled only by an enlightened conscience; and the social laws of Jesus are precisely what is needed for its enlightenment and guidance.[21]

[21] For a discussion of the social teachings of Jesus as the solution of social problems, see my "The Times and

Property is the kernel of the social question. The economic problem of the future is not the production of property, but its distribution. Until the advent of steam, the first great question was how to produce the good things of life; how to divide them, though important, was secondary. But the application of nature's forces to manufacture solved the problem of production; and the average workman now with the aid of machinery produces about fifty times as much as the average workman of a few generations ago. We can now produce more of any great staple than the world can consume. Men still starve and live in rags, but only because they have nothing to exchange for food and clothing. That is, the question of distribution has become the great subject of contention.

Young Men," where a chapter is devoted to showing that the three fundamental laws of the kingdom are identical with the three great social laws, on obedience to which depends the health of society.

Here are some of the burning social questions of the day. The list was taken quite at random; and it will be seen that property—the distribution of property—is at the bottom of every one of them[22]: "Has any one a right to property? or is it true, as the French philosopher, Proudhon, said, that 'property is theft'? If a man has a right to property, is there any limit to the amount he has a right to hold? Has he any right to a superfluity while others, equally deserving, are in want? If a man has a right to property, has he a right to spend it as he pleases? Has any one a right to property in land? or is the land the natural heritage of all the people? Has every man a right to live? If so, has he a right to the means of life? And has he a right to do with his life what he pleases? Has he a right to self-development—to make the most of himself? If so, how is that right to be secured? Is it the duty of every able-bodied person to work? If so,

[22] "The Times and Young Men," pp. 99, 100.

how is that obligation to be enforced? Has every one a right to work? If so, whose duty is it to furnish employment? Is labor the source of all wealth? What are the rights of labor? and what are the rights of capital? What are the relations of the two? If they have rights, have they not also duties? What are the duties of each? What are the relations of organized and unorganized labor? Has unorganized labor no rights? How is the centralization of industrial power to be harmonized with the distribution of political power? That is, how is organized industry to be reconciled with democracy?"

Not one of these questions can be settled, or even discussed, without involving the problem of distribution; and that is more a question of morals than of economics, and will never be settled until men emphasize duties rather than rights. It is, therefore, primarily a question of conscience, which permits us to forego rights, but holds us to duties. And be it ob-

served, the social laws of Jesus deal with duties, not with rights.

Duties give; rights get. When you emphasize rights, you are seeking your own; when you emphasize duties, you are seeking the welfare of another. It is the sense of duty which enables you to put yourself in the other fellow's place; and that is often the first step toward the settlement of differences. When men quarrel it is over their "rights." Legislatures and courts deal primarily with rights rather than duties. They recognize and enforce duties, but only when the obligations of one man are involved in the rights of another. Our legislative system, our judicial system, our economic system, our social system, are all based on *rights*, because they are all the outgrowth of the old individualistic spirit.

The new civilization, in which life is becoming one, and interests common, and well-being more and more widely conditioned, must be, and will be, animated by the social spirit, which emphasizes duties rather than rights.

Legislatures and courts, therefore, can furnish no radical solution of the problem of distribution. Laws may restrain greed in some measure. They may mitigate evils by making it harder to do wrong and easier to do right; but so long as men are grasping, and some are stronger than others, there will be strife over the problem of distribution.

The root evil is selfishness, and its removal, therefore, is the only radical solution of this and other social problems.

Now Jesus' social legislation—the law of service, the law of sacrifice, and the law of love—was aimed at the uprooting of human selfishness. These laws are fundamentally one—the law of love; and disinterested love is the perfect opposite, the perfect remedy, and the only remedy, of selfishness.

Permit a few illustrations. It is not really the unequal distribution of property, but the selfish use of it, which breeds envy and hatred. Let a man much richer than his neighbors

adopt their scale of living, and use his revenues for the public good, and his wealth would excite no jealousy. He has the care of his possessions, but the public has the good of them, because he has really accepted Christian stewardship. I know a man in humble circumstances, who on seeing pass a woman, widely known and loved for her benefactions, remarked: "I am a poor man, but I don't begrudge that woman one cent. I wish she had twice as much as she has."

Suppose capital and labor were both brought under the Christian law of service; there could be no more conflict between them than between brain and hand. If labor unions were formed with a view to more efficient service, and capitalistic combinations were made for the benefit of employees and of the general public, we should hear no more of strikes and lockouts.

A deep popular discontent is one of the characteristics of our times. It is constantly asking for a larger share of the good things of life.

I do not think labor receives its proper share, but a much larger proportion would not quiet discontent. The sad affair at Homestead, a few years ago, began, I am told, with the strike of 256 men, who were receiving at the time average wages of fifteen dollars a day; but the men were not satisfied. I suspect that the average millionaire, who is living to get instead of to give, is as dissatisfied as the average wage-earner, only he does not blame the social system, and, therefore, does not agitate. There are legitimate reasons for popular discontent, but its fundamental cause is the lack of the spirit of service. A Connecticut pastor writes me: "I find myself constantly saying, 'All this discontent among the laboring classes, and all these justifiable causes, exist just as really among all who are dependent upon salaries—professors, clerks, bookkeepers, agents, and pre-eminently among clergymen.' There is not one minister in 1000, in this country, who can save on his salary, in fifty years, $1000. . . .

Now, why should not all ministers, as well as factory and railroad men, be discontented and 'strike'? . . . My cook is better paid than the educated young ladies who teach in our high school. My hired man is better paid for the hours he works than I am, and yet I have more than the average country minister's salary."

The cook, though better paid, is doubtless less contented than the high school teachers. She is probably working simply for her wages, and receives nothing more, while the teachers, if worthy of their work, are more interested in their pupils than in their salaries; and having more or less of the spirit of service, they know its satisfaction. The salary of the minister is a small part of his compensation. If worthy of his work, he is in the ministry to serve; and to him who has the spirit of service, service is its own great reward; salary is incidental. When the spirit of service becomes general, popular discontent will cease.

Hon. Carroll D. Wright, than whom no one

is better qualified to form an intelligent judgment, wrote last August: "After many years of investigation into the social, moral and industrial condition of the people, I came to the conclusion that in the adoption of the philosophy of the religion of Christ as a practical creed for the conduct of business, there was to be found the surest and speediest solution of the difficulties which excite the minds of men, and which lead many to think social, industrial and political revolution is at hand. I still remain of the same opinion."

This is not simply a matter of theory; not a few instances may be given of the practical application of Christian principles to industry. The famous experiment of the Parisian house painter, Leclaire, was based on the teachings of Jesus and inspired by his spirit. On his death-bed Leclaire wrote: "I am the humble disciple of him who has told us to do to others what we would have others do to us, and to love our neighbor as ourselves; it is in this

sense that I desire to remain a Christian until my last breath."

A well-known manufacturer of Columbus, Ohio, writes:

"We have always endeavored to treat our employees as men, with the same feelings, hopes and rights as ourselves, and to consider that we are all of us one great family with mutual interests. I have not begun to do as much for our employees as they have done for me, but have endeavored to treat always as I should like to be treated if our positions were reversed. Our relations for nearly thirty years have been always friendly and satisfactory, we have never had any strikes or troubles of any kind, but this is owing as much, if not more, to the character of our employees. As illustrative of this I will tell you of an incident which occurred during the panic of '93:

"A month or so after the panic began, and when large concerns were failing in every direction, there filed into my office one morning

some fifteen or twenty men, representing the several shops in our plant. Their manner and looks were serious, and while I had no more earnest wish than that I should never have any trouble with our employees, I feared that it had come at last. Finally one of them, as spokesman, said that they had thought very long over the matter that had brought them there before they had decided to come, and that they hoped they would find me prepared to accede to their request; that they had noticed that large concerns who had stood the stress of many panics were failing every day; that our warehouses were filling with goods which we couldn't sell, and that they presumed we, like others, were unable to obtain payment for goods already sold and that they feared that we might be in danger as well as other concerns; that some of them had been with us for a few years, some for many years, and some the length of a generation; that they had always received fair wages and had been able to save some money,

and while the individual savings were not large, the aggregate was a considerable sum, and that they had come to tell me the whole of it was at my disposal for the use of the company if it were needed.

"I will leave you to imagine what my feelings were, for I have never, from that date to this, been able to find words in which to suitably express them."

The president of a large coal and iron company in the South writes as follows:

"It has occurred to me to state also that I have an idea that good wages will not always and at all times satisfy men. My judgment is that love is the only thing that will control them at all times and under all circumstances; and unless a man can love his operatives, and have them love him, he cannot control them under all the trying ordeals through which both sides will have to go during the life of a business. In my judgment, there comes a time in the affairs of our operatives in which they will

not be satisfied with money alone. In other words, I think occasionally a crisis arises in their affairs, or they get in such a shape or frame of mind that nothing will satisfy them but to feel that they are loved by their employer. If an operator can really love those who are under his control, and not look on them as servants, but as friends, and can make them feel that his liberality is not exercised as a gift to be especially grateful for, but that it is his pleasure to divide the earnings with them in an equitable manner, and can assure them of his love and sympathy—then and in that event, he can control them when a serious crisis comes. But I do not think any operator can ever exercise a successful headship over his employees, unless he himself first acknowledges the headship of God.

"I have overcome some very difficult situations in the past at our different mines, and have controlled and kept at work large bodies of men when all the mines around us were

closed down by bitter strikes. But, as before stated, I cannot say whether I will be able to do this always in future or not; but I do say that this kind of a course is, in my judgment, the proper one to pursue; and will bring the best results that can be obtained both in the matter of a good conscience and also better returns for capital invested."

From another letter by the same man I quote the following: "Men conquered by force are only half conquered, and will fight again and tear up things when they get another opportunity. But men once conquered by love and reason will remain true. They are fully satisfied with their surroundings after they are won in this manner, but it must be a genuine conversion or it will not hold. I believe that if love of humanity and fair dealing are back of an employer's acts, he will be able to ride successfully every storm that comes."

Instances might by multiplied of business enterprises, conducted on Christian principles,

which are free from the ordinary strifes of the industrial world, and are eminently successful from a business point of view, but the above must suffice.

It has been shown that the social teachings of Jesus would spiritualize and perfect the new social ideal, would educate the new social conscience, and afford a radical remedy for social disorders.

IX

THE SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF JESUS APPLIED WILL BRING SPIRITUAL QUICKENING

"To be enthusiastic about the church in its present condition," says Professor Bruce, "is impossible."[23]

The church has become a very respectable institution which must be "sustained." Christianity is vital and is giving life and inspiration and power to many individual lives both inside and outside of the church, but the church is not leading the way in the new civilization. It is doing much to conserve the heritage of the past, but not much to mold the future. It affords a

[23] "The Kingdom of God," p. 272.

certain amount of restraint, but not much inspiration.

It is unnecessary to dwell upon the meager growth of the church, and the general alienation of working men, which means the multitude. These facts have been conspicuous for years, and go without saying. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the prevailing worldliness, and the profound need of a mighty spiritual quickening. It is those who love the church most devotedly who feel these facts most deeply.

The object of the preceding discussion has been to show that the great awakening so sorely needed to vitalize the church, to lift civilization to a higher plane, and to hasten the coming of the kingdom of God in the world, may be confidently expected when it is intelligently sought, when necessary conditions are complied with, when the way of the Lord is prepared.

We have seen that the supreme need of the

world is God—a real God, a present and a potent God; and that he becomes real to men when they apprehend him in relation to their own times (Chap. I).

A review of the great historical awakenings has shown us that men thus apprehend God, when neglected Scriptural truth, which is precisely adapted to the peculiar needs of the times, is faithfully preached. It may be safely assumed that peculiar need of spiritual quickening has come from the neglect of some vital truth. That truth of course proves to be precisely adapted to the needs of the times, and having been neglected, it comes home to men, when faithfully preached, with all the power of new truth (Chap. II).

We have seen that the social teachings of Jesus have been, until recently, almost wholly neglected, or very generally misapprehended. The kingdom of God, which was the great burden of his preaching, has been commonly misunderstood; and the social character of the

fundamental laws of that kingdom has been forgotten (Chaps. III-VII).

We have made a study of these social teachings of Jesus, and have found that the kingdom of God was his social ideal, the will of God, done in earth as it is in heaven; that is, an ideal world.

It has been shown that the true conception of the kingdom of God, as a social ideal, fits the times as a glove fits the hand. There is a prevailing worldliness (a practical denial of the reality of God), enhanced by the intense materialism of the day; and we have seen that the material, when rightly understood as a part of the kingdom of God, ceases to be an obstacle between us and spiritual things, and becomes a medium through which we may reach and influence the spiritual life. The bird's wings add weight to her body, but when she learns how to use them, they enable her to rise (Chap. V, 1).

Again, the scientific habit of mind which has

swept away many long cherished beliefs, and produced an atmosphere of doubt, has led men back to the Christianity of Christ, and at the same time cleared the way for his doctrine of the kingdom.

Again, the scientific conception of natural law, by eliminating a personal will, has seemed to many to banish God from the physical universe, thus intensifying the prevailing worldliness; and we have seen that a true conception of the kingdom, as the synthesis of the physical and the spiritual, makes God immanent in nature, the laws of which are only the expression of his will, and affords a reasonable basis for faith in providence and in prayer (Chap V, 2).

Another reason why God has seemed unreal or far from the real world is because men have run an imaginary line through life—a sort of equator—dividing it into hemispheres with opposite poles. On one side of this line is the "secular," which is at least Godless, if not ungodly, and like the Northern Hemisphere, that

would seem to be the side of this spiritual equator where most of the world's population live. We have seen that the true doctrine of the kingdom of God wipes out this line, which is as mischievous as it is imaginary, and gives to God his own, bringing him back into business and into all the activities of daily life (Chap. V, 4).

Again, we have seen that the true doctrine of the kingdom makes obvious the true mission of the church (Chap. V, 4). When the church accepts that doctrine, she will move out upon the highway of progress to the fulfillment of her mission. Failing to recognize the physical element in the kingdom, she has failed in her duty to the physical needs of humanity.

Jesus does not say that the first and second travelers came and looked on the wounded wayfarer and passed on, while the third had mercy on him. It is significant that the men who passed by on the other side were *priest* and *Levite*—officials and representatives of the

orthodox church. It is significant that the man who had mercy on the sufferer was a *Samaritan,* outside the pale of the true church and despised by its members; and yet he manifested that love which showed that he deemed himself neighbor to suffering humanity, wherever found.

Is not the same old story being retold to-day? So far as the bodily needs of humanity are concerned (and they were bodily needs to which the Good Samaritan ministered), the orthodox churches generally are passing by on the other side. It is the insurance societies, the secret fraternities, the town authorities, the organized charities—Samaritans every one, outside the pale of the church—that are ministering to physical want.

Jesus recognized physical suffering and physical needs, and ministered to them; and so doing, gave to men a proof of his love which the most ignorant and degraded could understand. Through the lower nature he reached

the higher. By going down to the physical plane, where the multitude lived, he was enabled to lay hold of men and lead them up to the spiritual plane where he lived. The physical suffering of the world affords to the church her great opportunity to minister to spiritual needs, and she hands this opportunity over to organizations which make no use of it.

The institutional churches, the Young Men's Christian Associations, and the Salvation Army, all recognize the physical man, and it is significant that they all attract precisely those classes which the churches generally so conspicuously fail to reach. "The three classes of religious organizations referred to above differ from each other in many particulars, but resemble one another in this, viz., they all alike recognize the whole man, body as well as soul, and adapt their methods accordingly. Precisely at this point they differ radically from the churches of the ordinary type. As they succeed where these churches fail, is it not

reasonable to attribute their common success to the methods which they have in common, and which differentiate their activities from those of the old-line churches?"[24]

The Miami Association of Ohio embraces the twenty-three Baptist churches of Cincinnati and vicinity. Two of them are "institutional"; and notwithstanding all the disadvantages of down-town conditions, which have either killed or driven away so many churches which adhered to the old methods, out of 325 additions on confession of faith to the twenty-three churches in a single year, 209 were received by these two churches which have adopted new methods. But for these two churches, the membership of the Association would have been smaller by four at the end of the year than it was at the beginning.[25]

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[24] My "Religious Movements for Social Betterment," pp. 33, 34.

[25] For further particulars concerning these churches, and for other illustrations, see my "Religious Movements for Social Betterment."

Thorold Rogers, commenting on the work of the Primitive Methodists and the Lollard Bible-men, says: "I believe it is true, that all successful religious movements have aimed at heightening the morality and improving the material condition of those whom they have striven to influence."[26]

After the French Revolution "an infidel propaganda with a social doctrine had well-nigh shaken modern society back into a barbaric chaos." In Germany, the alienation of the people from the church, their poverty, their bitterness against the more favored classes, and their drunkenness and vice "made society a festering mass of corruption." The establishment of the "Inner Mission" (in 1848), which "covered the land with ameliorative agencies and institutions—city unions, orphanages, asylums, hospitals, deaconess institutions, etc., touching the life of the people at all points, and

[26] "Work and Wages," p. 516. Quoted in Bascom's "Sociology," p. 178.

healing the wounds of society," was "the salvation of Germany and also of the German churches."[27]

Let us suppose a church somewhere, whose members have such an enthusiasm for humanity that when they lie awake nights they are planning, not how to make money, but how to make *men*. Their supreme desire is to help the world in general and their own community in particular. They are striving daily to remove every moral and physical evil; trying to give every child who comes into the world the best possible chance; longing and working and praying and spending themselves and their substance to save men from sin and ignorance and suffering. Let us suppose the whole church is co-operating to this end. What a transformation such a church would work in any community! How it would "reach the masses"! How it would grow! How it

[27] See Dr. John B. Paton's "Inner Mission." Pub. by James Clarke & Sons, 13 Fleet St., London.

would be talked about and written up! Men would make pilgrimages to study its workings and its success. Yet such a church ought not to be in the least degree peculiar. This is simply the picture of a church whose membership is imbued with the social ideal of Jesus, and has taken seriously his social laws of service, sacrifice and love; and this picture ought to be the likeness of every Christian church in every community. If it were, how many hours would it be before the kingdom would come with blessed fullness?

There is an enormous power in the teachings of Jesus which has never been applied. It is like water above the dam, never turned to the wheel, like coal in the mine, never raised and fired.

If the pulpit is to make this unused power felt, it must first be experienced. No one preaches the truth with power until he has himself had a deep personal experience of its power. The truths which were so mighty on

the lips of Luther and Wesley and Finney and Moody had first been mighty in their own hearts. Suppose we ministers begin with ourselves, and make sure that we are ready for disinterested service; make it quite sure that we ourselves have been to Golgotha, and have there been crucified, so that *we* are dead, and the life in us is the life of Christ; make it quite sure that our own hearts are aglow with the love that overflows to God and man. Then we may expect that these neglected truths of Jesus will be preached to the churches with mighty power until church membership really stands for Christian service, Christian sacrifice and Christian love. And *then* this gospel of God will indeed be the power of God unto salvation to the multitudes to whom he is now unreal.

It will not be difficult then to awake the conscience. A worldly man likes to believe that professed Christians are essentially the same as himself, and differ only in that they

profess to be what they are not. As long as he sees no essential difference, he is self-satisfied. If conformity to the world could have won it, it should have been won long since. It is when worldly men become convinced that there is not only a difference, but a radical difference, between themselves and Christians that they desire a change or see the need of any. When church members generally live a life of service and sacrifice so real that it cannot be kept secret, so real that it becomes as obvious as a city set on a hill, then selfish men will be convicted of sin.

When God becomes real to men, the guilt of sin becomes real; and, as we have seen, God is actualized when he is interpreted in the terms of present-day truth and in the every-day life of living epistles.

Has not the time come to apply to existing conditions the social teachings of Jesus, which are so perfectly applicable?

Has not the time fully come to take Jesus

Christ seriously? Let us either do the things that he says, or cease calling him Lord. If we wish to actualize God, let us obey him.

At Reigate, England, in the spacious grounds of the ancient Priory, there is a tree which is known as the "tree of decision." Under it stood Lady Henry Somerset in the darkest hour of her life; the very foundations seemed to be giving away. She was struggling with the awful question, Is there a God? when there came to her the message, *"Live as though I were, and you shall know that I am."* The decision was made, and God became real.

When the world lives as if God were, the world will have a REAL GOD. HIS TABERNACLE WILL BE WITH MEN, AND HE WILL DWELL WITH THEM, AND THEY SHALL BE HIS PEOPLE, AND GOD HIMSELF SHALL BE WITH THEM, AND BE THEIR GOD.

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